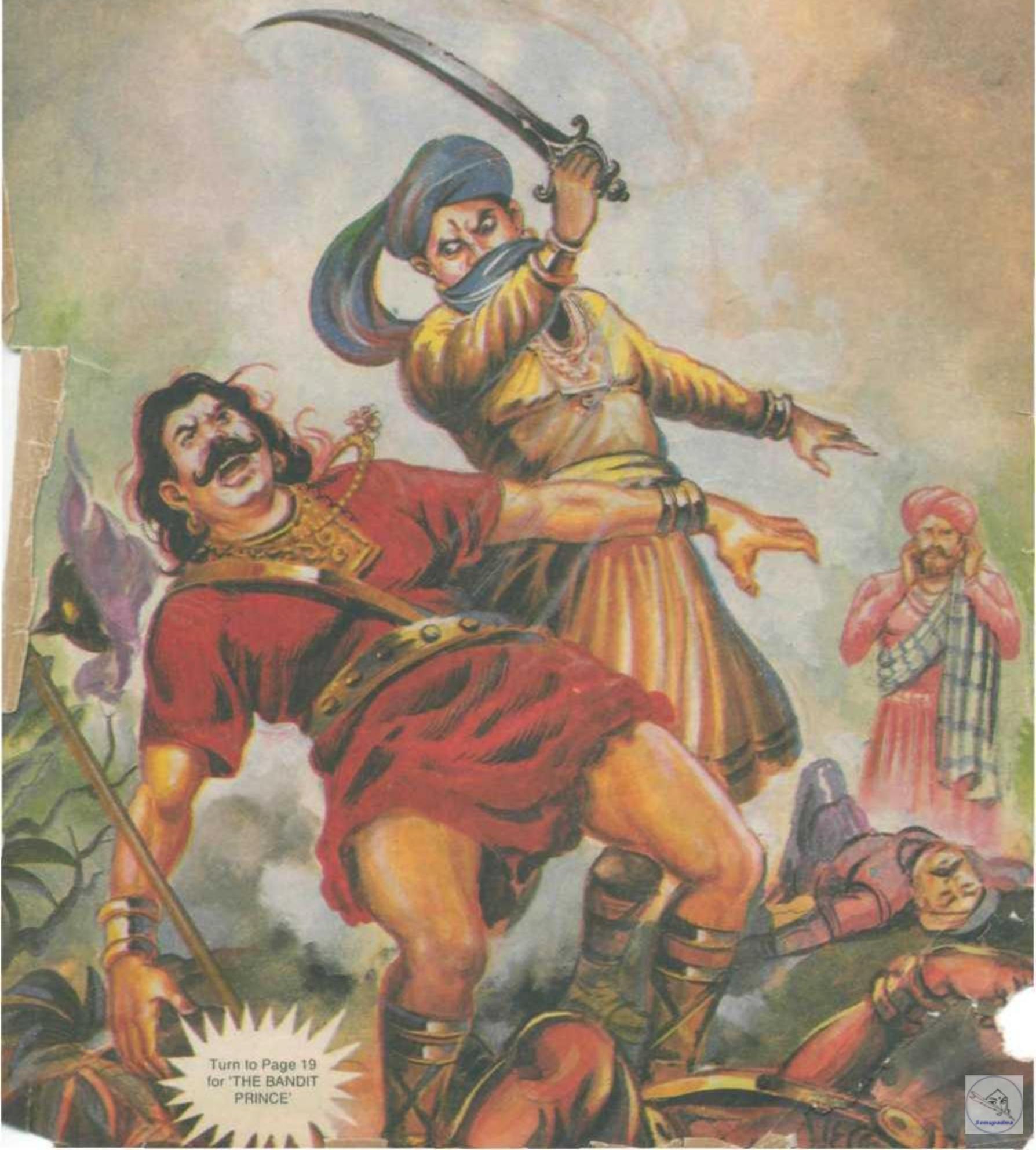


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IN THIS ISSUE

Vol. 20 JANUARY 1990 No. 7

Mythology:

The Master And The Bereaved
Mother—In Story Of Buddha ... Page 28

Stories:

Boons From A Deity	... Page 12
Two Travellers	... Page 16
The Bandit Prince (5)	... Page 19
Gobar Chand's Reason	... Page 25
Supplement—16	... Page 33
The Big Versus The Small	... Page 37
Strange Blessings	... Page 41
Three Questions	... Page 54
Does It Make All That Difference?	... Page 57
The Unusual Will	... Page 58
Because Of The Rains	... Page 62

Picture Stories:

Forest Without Beasts ... Page 26

Features:

Collapse Of A Big Bad Wall	... Page 10
The Postal Service	... Page 49
World Of Nature	... Page 52
World Of Sport	... Page 53

**And News Flash, Let Us Know
and More!**

NEXT ISSUE

Vol. 20 FEBRUARY 1990 No. 8

SPRING COMES TO THE FOREST: Yes, it is a spring in more than one sense of the term. A little boy has got very strange friends—and the animals of the forest have got an unusual leader.

DANGERS TO THE BUDDHA: Who could be an enemy of the enlightened one?

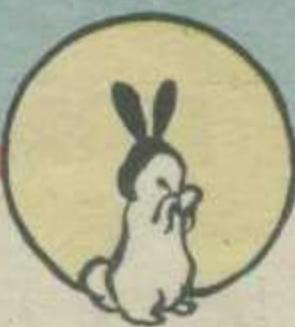
A fairy tale, the wit of Birbal, a bunch of absorbing stories along with the regular features.

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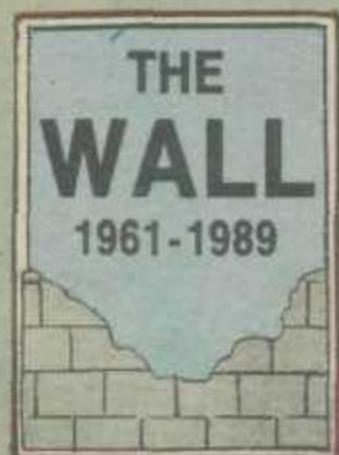


GREETINGS AND AN APPEAL

Every event that marks a change in the social or political set-up of the country can be a progress, a change for the better. That can be possible if the people as a whole aspire for it and if those at the helm of affairs are keen to satisfy the people's aspirations.

India has a new ministry with Shri V.P.Singh as its leader. The people of India have accorded their warm greetings to him and so have we. Everybody knows that today's children are the future hope of the country. But are we doing everything possible to make their progress and mental development a smooth-sailing process? For years past, we have felt a great strain because of the periodic rise in the cost of production of the magazine, particularly in relation to paper. How can we serve the children at this rate of increasing difficulties? Will it be proper for us to expect the children or their guardians to pay heavily for the reading pleasure and education of the young? Our appeal to the authorities is to give a serious thought to this problem and come out with a solution. We believe, a healthy reading habit is as important as healthy nourishment.





COLLAPSE OF A BIG BAD



You must have read in *Chandamama* or in some other magazine or book about the Great Wall of China. That was built in a remote past to safeguard the territory of China from invaders. It is one of the Seven Wonders of the world.

But in recent times—in 1961 a big wall was built for an opposite reason. The authorities who built it wanted to check their own people from going out of their country.

In order to understand the situation, we have to go back to the time of the World War II. Hitler, the dictator of Germany, was out to conquer the world. He was defeated in 1945. Berlin, his capital, was divided into two major parts. One part popularly known as West Berlin, was kept under the control of the U.K., the U.S.A. and France. The other part, popularly known as East Berlin, remained under the

control of the U.S.S.R. (These four powers played the major role in defeating Hitler and his collaborators.)

In 1955, both the Berlins became independent. The official name of East Berlin is German Democratic Republic and that of West Berlin is German Federal Republic. The two Berlins had two different political systems. East Berlin, though 'Democratic' by name, was a communist country, West Berlin was democratic. For many reasons the development and progress of West Berlin was faster than those in East Berlin. What is more, in West Berlin, the people had the freedom to speak out their minds. Such a freedom was not available to the citizens of East Berlin. West Berlin has a population of 61 million; East Berlin of 17 million.

The East Berliners yearned to migrate to West Berlin or at least

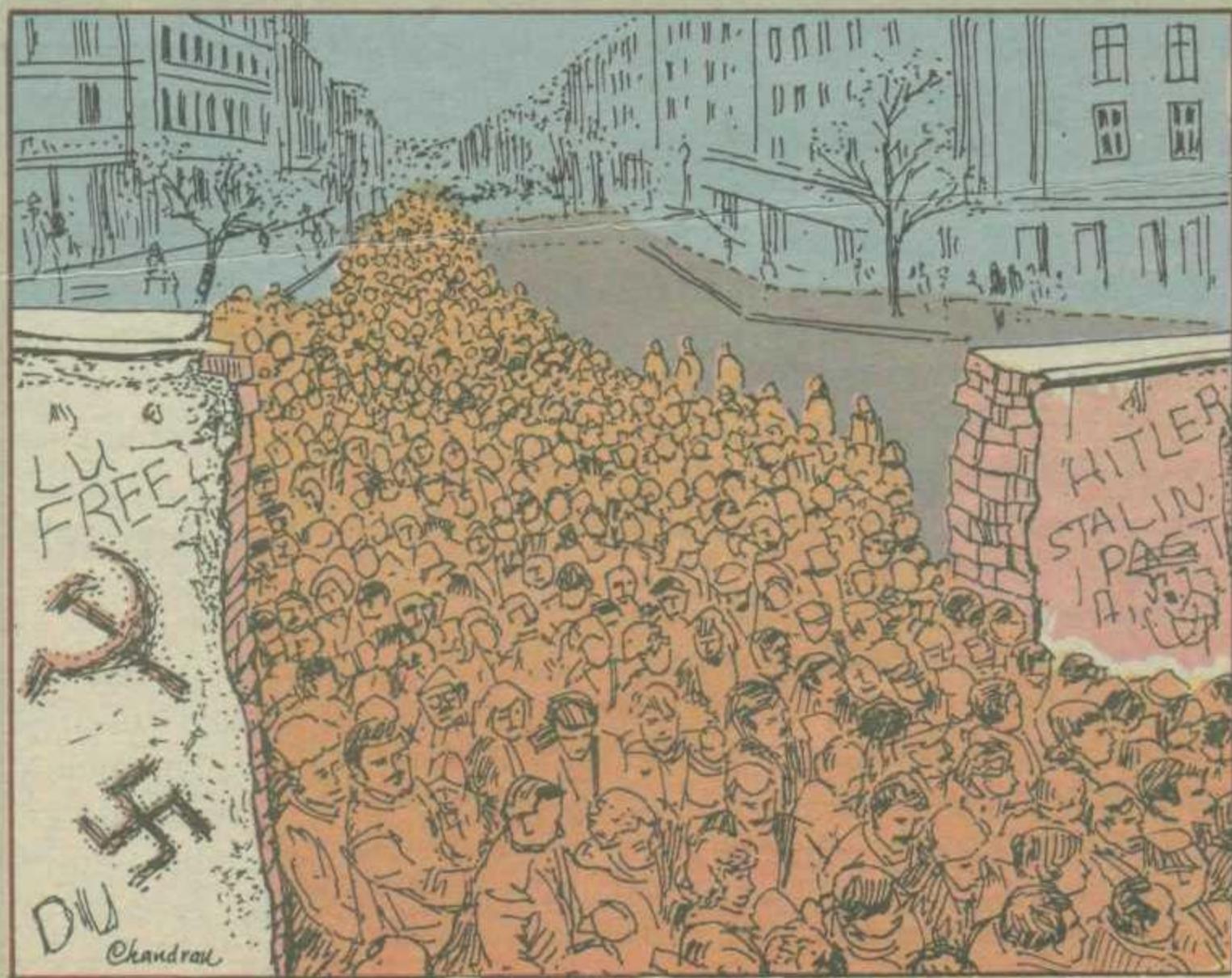


to visit their friends and relatives there. But the government of East Berlin would not let them enjoy this privilege. So, it built a high wall across the border. Sometimes when an East Berliner tried to scale the wall to cross over to the other side, he was shot at by the East Berlin police. The wall was hated by the common men. Resentment against the wall mounted. The people also craved for democracy and freedom to vote for any party they liked; they did not like to be ruled

by one party forever.

At last, recently, the East Berlin government decided to open the gates of the wall for free movement between the two Berlins. Tens of thousands of East Berliners danced in joy; their West Berlin brethren responded with equal joy. Parts of the wall were pulled down in jubilation.

The collapse of the Berlin Wall is considered as a triumph for man's urge for freedom and unity.





BOONS FROM A DEITY

In a certain village lived a young man named Ballav. He was a woodcutter by profession. Though the forest near his village abounded in trees, life was not easy for him. He had to work hard to earn a living.

One day, as he set out for the forest, his wife, Leela, told him, "Look here, tomorrow is our daughter's birthday. Yesterday she saw a toy parrot in the bazar. She wants to have it. Try to cut down some choice tree today so that it can fetch a good price. Buy the toy for her after selling the wood."

"Let me see what I can do," said Ballav as he went out into the forest.

He looked for a handsome tree. Suddenly his eyes fell on a new tree, the like of which he had never seen before. He raised his

axe to fell it.

"Wait!" said some strange voice.

Ballav saw a luminous figure before him. "Must you fell the only sandalwood tree in the forest? Don't do so!" the divine figure said.

Ballav guessed that she was the deity of the forest. He bowed to her and said, "What can I do? It is my little daughter Shanti's fond wish to buy a doll—a toy parrot. How can I disappoint her on her birthday which is tomorrow? For that I need some extra money."

"I will give you a live parrot—a talking parrot at that," said the deity. She just looked towards the sky and the next moment a beautiful parrot came down flapping its wings and sat down on her hand. She gave it to

Ballav.

"Will it really talk?" asked Ballav.

"How dare you doubt the deity of the forest?" asked the parrot. Ballav was very much impressed. He thanked the deity.

As soon as Ballav entered his house the parrot spoke out, "Shanti, we will be friends and play together, shouldn't we?"

Leela and Shanti could not believe their own eyes and ears. Parrots can utter some words when taught. But can a parrot speak like a human being? Shanti kept playing with the bird till late into the night.

In the morning Ballav's wife had a new idea. "You need not go for felling trees any more. Carry this parrot to the town. Announce aloud that you own a miraculous parrot which can talk better than any man! But whoever wishes to talk to it, must pay a fee of a rupee," she told her husband.

"Oh no, I don't want to part with my parrot!" exclaimed Shanti. But Leela pushed the child into a room and locked it. She compelled her husband to carry the parrot to the town.

The town was not far from the village. People in the town knew



Ballav who sold them chopped wood. They were surprised when he claimed miraculous powers for his parrot, but they could not dismiss his claim as nonsense. Soon the bird became the talk of the town. By noon more than a hundred people had paid Ballav a rupee each and had talked to the parrot.

It so happened that the king was slowly riding through the town, while his sepoys kept pace with him, jogging. The king's attention went over to the crowd. When he found out what the matter was, he got very angry with Ballav.

"Does the fellow not know

that such a wonderful bird should be with the king? How did he forget to make a gift of it to us?" he shouted. Then he asked his sepoys to whip Ballav seven times and take over the parrot from him. The king's orders were carried out.

Ballav returned home feeling quite humiliated. But Leela was not sorry on account of the loss of the parrot. "I have a bright idea," she said. "Go near the sandalwood tree once again and raise your axe as if you were about to cut it down. The deity will ask you not to do so. You can then say that you need money to buy a gold necklace for me as my

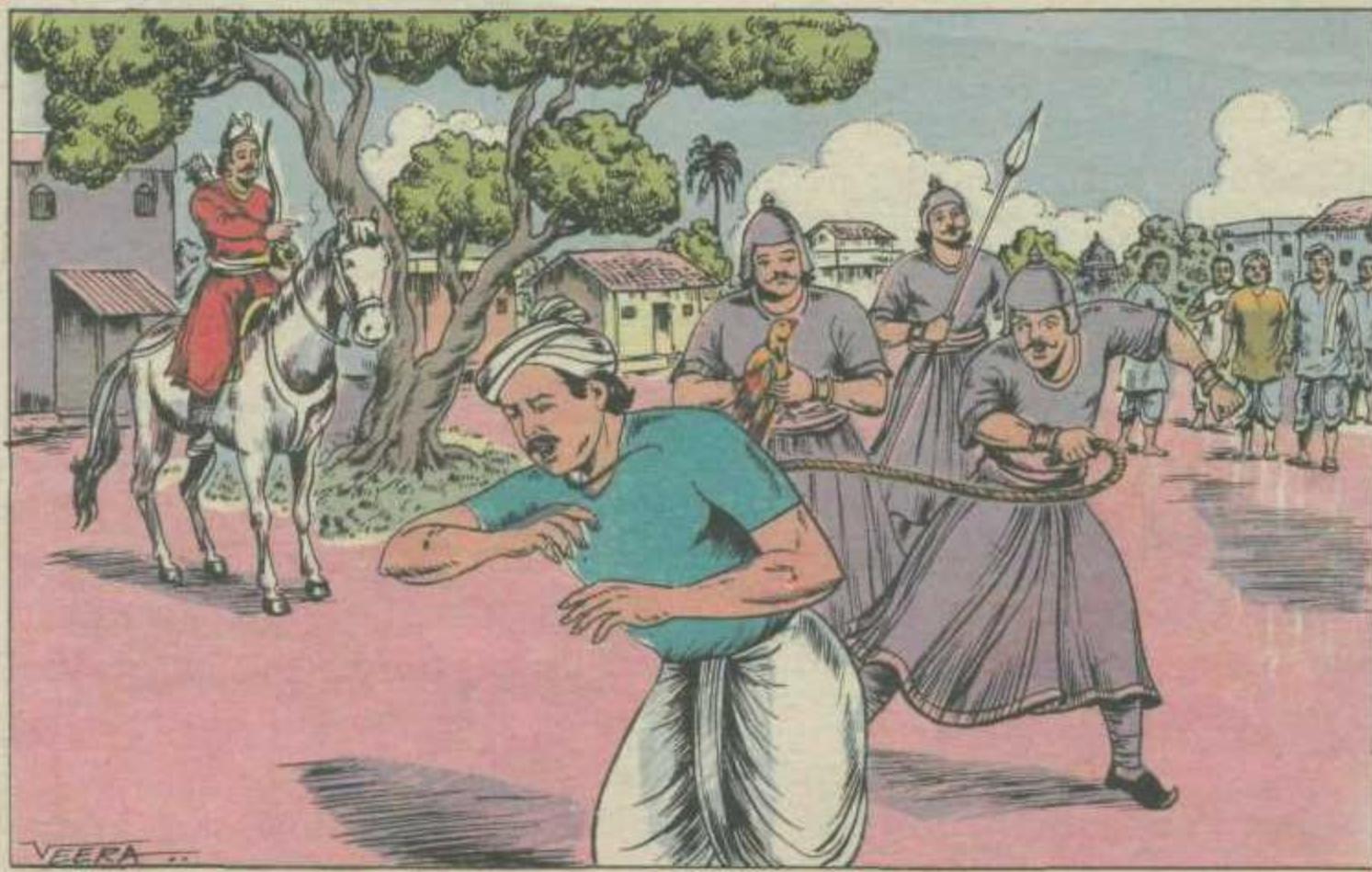
birthday falls tomorrow."

Ballav did not like the idea of lying to the deity, but he had to act according to Leela's wish. The deity asked him not to fell the tree and gave him a gold necklace.

It was a costly necklace indeed. Leela was very happy to receive it. Proudly she started showing it to everybody.

A burglar who heard about her necklace and saw it from some distance entered her room at night and gave it a sudden pull. The necklace snapped. The burglar escaped with it. Leela was left with a pain in her neck.

But in the morning Leela had



yet another idea. "Again pretend to fell the sandalwood tree. When the deity would stop you, tell her that you will not spare the tree unless she gives you a sackful of gold! Once we get the gold, we will go over to the town, buy a house and live happily," said Leela.

Ballav disliked her idea more than ever. But what can he do? He had to do as advised. And the deity waved her hand and in front of Ballav popped a sackful of gold.

Ballav was returning home with the gold when he came face to face with two sepoys. "What are you carrying?" they demanded to know.

"Wood... oh no....soil....oh no grass....oh no vegetables," answered a nervous Ballav. The sepoys naturally grew suspicious.

They opened the bag forcibly and were amazed to see its content. They concluded that Ballav was a bandit. They dragged him to the king.

The king was no less amazed at the sight of the gold. He said, "I had never known a bandit like you. But you were caught just when I needed money. That is why I will award only light punishment to you."

Ballav was kept in jail for a year. When he was released, his wife told him, "Go to the forest and pretend to..."

"Sorry, the tree is no longer there. I came from jail via the forest. I did not find the tree. Surely, it was uprooted by the last cyclone," he told Leela.

We do not know whether or not he spoke the truth!





TWO TRAVELLERS

In days gone by there was a shrine amidst the hills of northern China. Once every year the scholars of the country came there to pay their homage to a sage who lay buried there.

Who was the sage and how was a shrine erected in his honour amidst the hills? This is the story behind it.

In a certain village lived Ay, a young scholar. There was nobody in his province who could be compared to him in scholarship. But since he lived in a village where most of the people were illiterates, his merit was not appreciated. He was a poor man.

One day an old traveller happened to find Ay. The traveller was a scholar from another distant village. He talked to Ay for a while and was left in no doubt about the fact that Ay was

a genuine scholar as well as a good man.

The old scholar, whose name was Tabu, told Ay, "I am deeply impressed by your learning. I am on my way to meet the king of the land of Nu. He respects scholars. I suggest that you accompany me. If we can prove our scholarship to the king, then our destinies can change. I have suffered all my life. I can pass my last days in comfort. You are young. Your future can be bright with the king's patronage."

Tabu's suggestion appealed to Ay. He accompanied the old man.

The capital of the kingdom of Nu was far. They walked for days. Ay had no money with him, but Tabu had some. They bought their food and paid for their shelter with Tabu's money.



Soon they entered a hilly and awfully cold region. That year the winter was severe. Soon both of them were exhausted. The old man told Ay, "Please put on my woollen too. I am so tired that I am sure to die today or tomorrow. There is no point in both of us dying. You ought to live."

But Ay paid no heed to Tabu's advice. He said, "I will help you to pass through this ordeal. Don't you worry."

Tabu repeated his proposal. But Ay did not listen to him.

One day both of them took shelter in a cave. Old Tabu said, "If you can chance upon some dry leaves and sticks, we can light

a fire and warm ourselves."

Ay went out to look for any bush which could be still sticking out of the snow. At last he found some dry twigs and collected them and brought them into the cave. But where was the old man? His woollen clothes were lying on the floor.

Ay hurried out and searched for his companion. At last he found him in a ditch, dead!

He was stunned. He realised that the old man had sacrificed his life so that Ay could cover himself better and reach his destination. Ay carried Tabu's dead body into the cave and covered it with snow. As desired





by the old man, he put on his woollen and resumed his journey.

Soon he found the weather growing better. He reached the capital of Nu without further difficulty.

The king was very happy with Ay's learning. He said, "Young man, you should have come here years ago!"

"My lord, I would never be here but for an old scholar!" said

Ay and he shed tears. The king was surprised. The young man then told him all about Tabu's sacrifice.

The king was moved. He went to honour Tabu's dead body in the cave and erected a monument on it. Ay visited the monument every year. Other scholars also began to do so. The monument came to be regarded as a shrine.

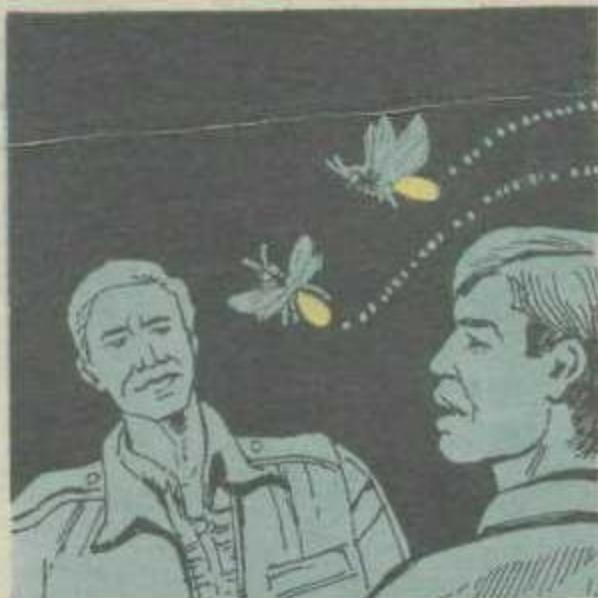
That is the story of the shrine at the desolate spot.

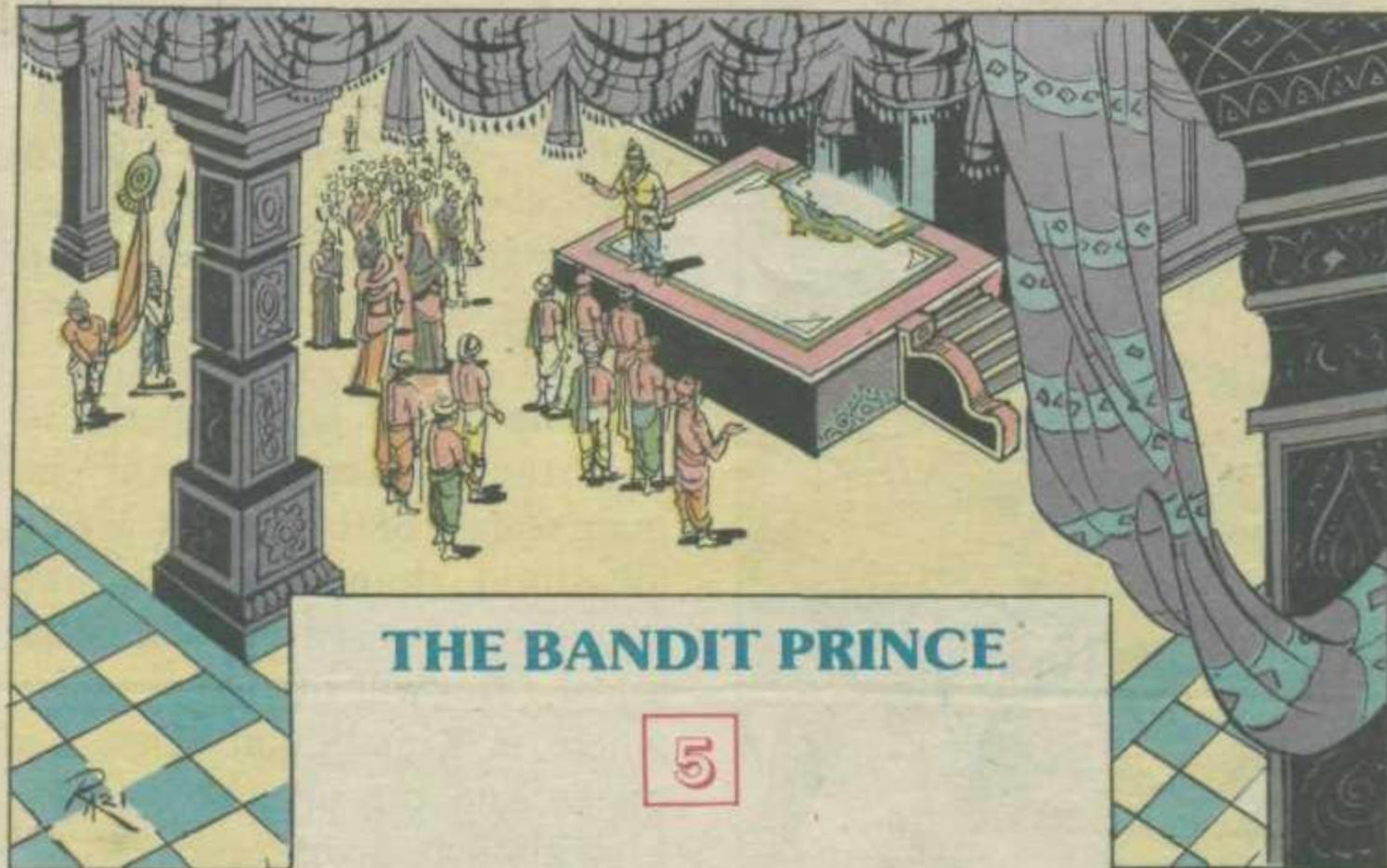
AN EXPERIENCE TO REMEMBER

Two visitors from Iceland had just reached an Indian town. They checked into a small hotel. At night they were troubled by mosquitoes. They had never known mosquitoes.

They switched off the lights, sure that the mosquitoes cannot find them in darkness. Soon a couple of fireflies entered the room.

"Good God! Now they have come back with tiny torchlights!" exclaimed one of them!





THE BANDIT PRINCE

5

(Vir Singh, the general of King Shanti Dev of Sumedh staged a coup one festive night. He planned to kill the young king, his queen and their infant prince. The queen escaped with the child. She handed over the child to a hermit in the forest before dying. The king's fate was not known.)

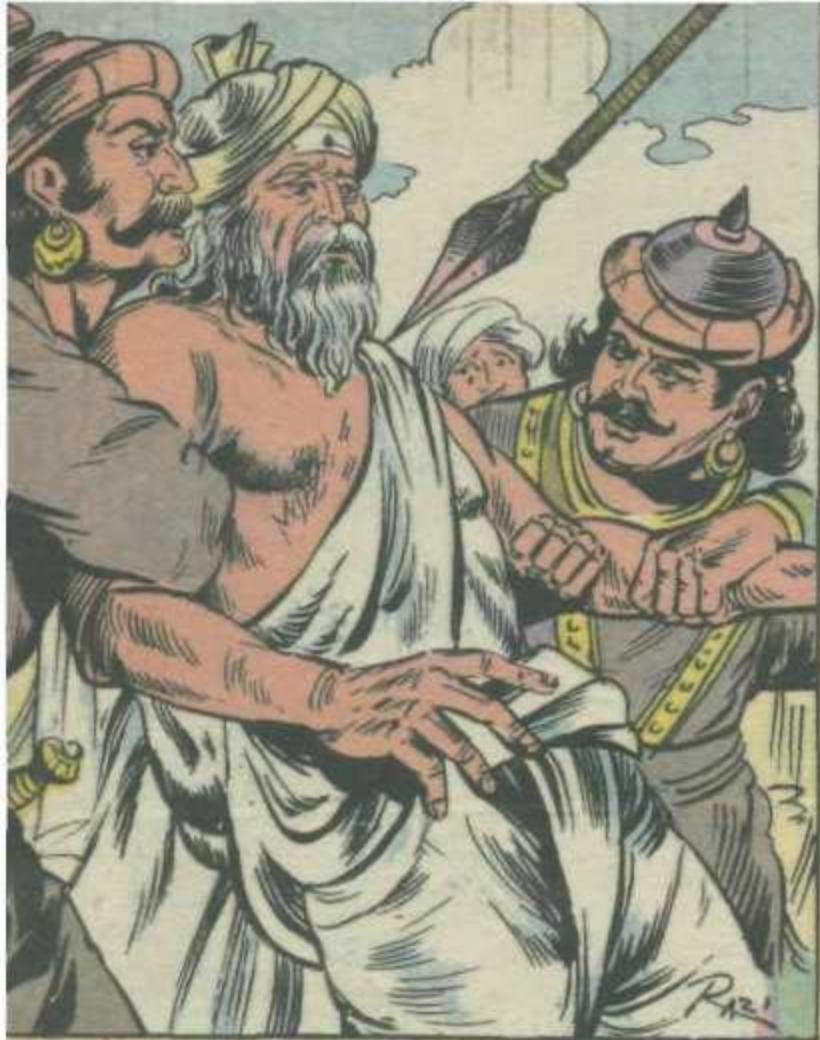
Nobody outside the royal castle knew what was happening inside the castle. Most of the people kept gazing at the fireworks which made deafening sounds and many others were enjoying the dance and drama presented at the same time. Some were just excited. They roamed about, enjoying the many attractions and marvelling at the glittering castle.

But as the night approached its last quarter, one by one the entertainments were over. The burnt-out crackers lay scattered, lifeless. The dancers and actors were busy rubbing out their make-up. The crowd began to disperse.

But a shock awaited the servants and officials of the palace. The chief of the palace staff commanded them to assemble in

THE TYRANT ON THE THRONE





the courtyard. Standing on a high verandah, he informed them, "The crown has passed from Shanti Dev to Vir Singh. It is nobody's business to ask anything more. It is a matter between the former king and the new king. You are all advised to keep quiet. You are not expected to discuss this change. Now, go back to your duties!"

The announcement made at different places in the city was not different. The people were warned not to raise any question regarding the change. Everywhere the announcers were accompanied by some soldiers. The citizens were stunned to hear

the announcement. On one of the city squares an old man commented, "What a news to greet us after such a happy night!" Immediately the soldiers pounced on the old man, tied his hands and led him away.

A big crowd had gathered to hear the announcement at the main square of the market. While all stood thunder-struck, one young man raised his voice and asked, "But will you please tell us where is King Shanti Dev, his queen and the prince? Has the king abdicated voluntarily?"

"It is none of your business!" shouted the captain of the small band of soldiers.

"It is our business, for we love King Shanti Dev!"

"Then come with us!" barked the captain.

"Why should I? All I want to know is why King Shanti Dev, whom we saw hale and hearty yesterday, should suddenly give up the throne!" said the young man.

The captain made no answer. He gave some signal to the soldiers. They caught hold of the young man and dragged him along with them. He struggled to free himself, but in vain.

Soon the people understood



that a tyrant had taken over the kingdom. They were in darkness about the fate of their good king, Shanti Dev. They wept for him, but could do nothing more. Anyone who dared to murmur against the usurper was brutally punished. Silence and sadness of a burial ground descended on the city of Shantipur which had been so jolly only a day before. The news of the coup reached Amritpur, the capital of the queen's father, but the army of Amritpur was too weak to face the army of Sumedh. Besides, Vir Singh started strengthening his army almost from the very first day of his usurping the throne.

The royal priest was asked to conduct the coronation of Vir Singh. But he said politely, "According to rules, a new king can be enthroned only at the death of a king or if the ruling king decides to retire. In any case, the successor to the throne must be the previous king's choice or one chosen by the nobility. How can I put the crown on your head without knowing the wish of King Shanti Dev or the wishes of the nobility?"

The royal priest was thrown into jail and another priest was brought to perform the ceremony.



Vir Singh dismissed those members of the royal court who were known for their devotion to King Shanti Dev. In the very first session of his court, he bestowed titles on several of his flatterers and made them his courtiers. He turned to the old minister and asked him, "Dear Minister, for a long time Shantipur had not gone out to conquer other territories. A king who does not know the joy of conquest is not worth his throne. Now, as a wise minister, it is your duty to tell us which kingdom should be our first target."

The old minister coughed and said, "General! I should..."





"How dare you address me as the general? I was the general. But now I am the king! You must change your old habit!" Vir Singh warned the minister in a stern voice. He was again and again adjusting his crown to hide his left ear which had been cut by King Shanti Dev's dagger when Vir Singh tried to kill him.

"Well, let me first submit that the duty of a king is to bring peace and prosperity to his subjects, not to go out for conquests!" said the minister.

"I note your advice, Minister, but I also note that you have carefully avoided addressing me as 'My lord' or as the 'King'!"

commented Vir Singh angrily.

"I am old and it is very difficult for me to change my old habits. I may be allowed to retire," said the minister.

"Minister!" thundered Vir Singh. "We can help you to retire not only from your post, but also from your life!"

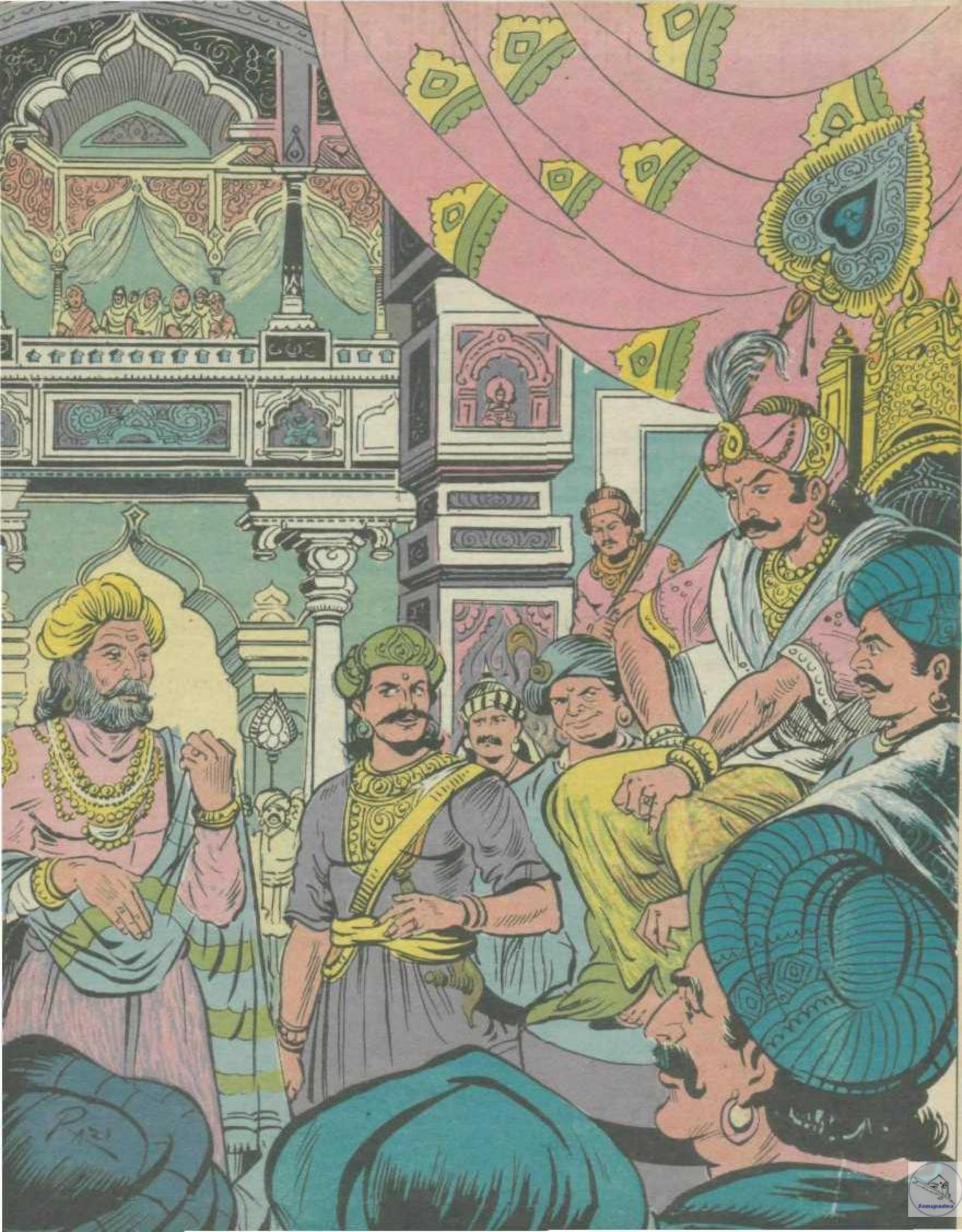
The minister said nothing, but shrugged and raised his hands to suggest that Vir Singh could do anything he liked! The minister knew that Vir Singh would not dare to harm him openly.

"All right, you are retired, Minister!" shouted Vir Singh. The minister greeted the court with folded hands and walked out. Vir Singh laughed behind him. His flatterers joined him in his laughter.

The minister was in the habit of visiting an ancient Shiva temple in a corner of the city. It was quite dark when he was returning home alone that evening. He had to cross a small avenue with trees and bushes on both the sides.

Suddenly three men jumped out of the bushes. One of them caught hold of the old man's hands. The other one clamped his palm on the minister's mouth so that he would not be able to







shout. The third one was directing the operation. They dragged the minister at great speed into a totally lonely spot surrounded by thick bushes.

The old minister was incapable of wriggling out of their hold. He resigned himself to his fate. He saw the third man's dagger dazzle in darkness. He expected it to fall on him. But something strange happened. The dagger flew up and fell on a rock with a sharp sound. The would-be assassin shrieked in pain and looked back. His two companions left the minister and tried to understand what had happened. But

they never had any chance to do that. Their heads rolled on the ground at three lightning strokes from a sword.

The mysterious man whose sword did the magic whispered to the minister, "The death of these murderers would not be discovered until tomorrow. You must leave the kingdom tonight! Go over to Amritpur."

"You!" said the minister in deep reverence and gratitude.

"Not a word more!" was the mysterious man's response. He disappeared in the darkness.

— To continue

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GOBAR CHAND'S REASONS

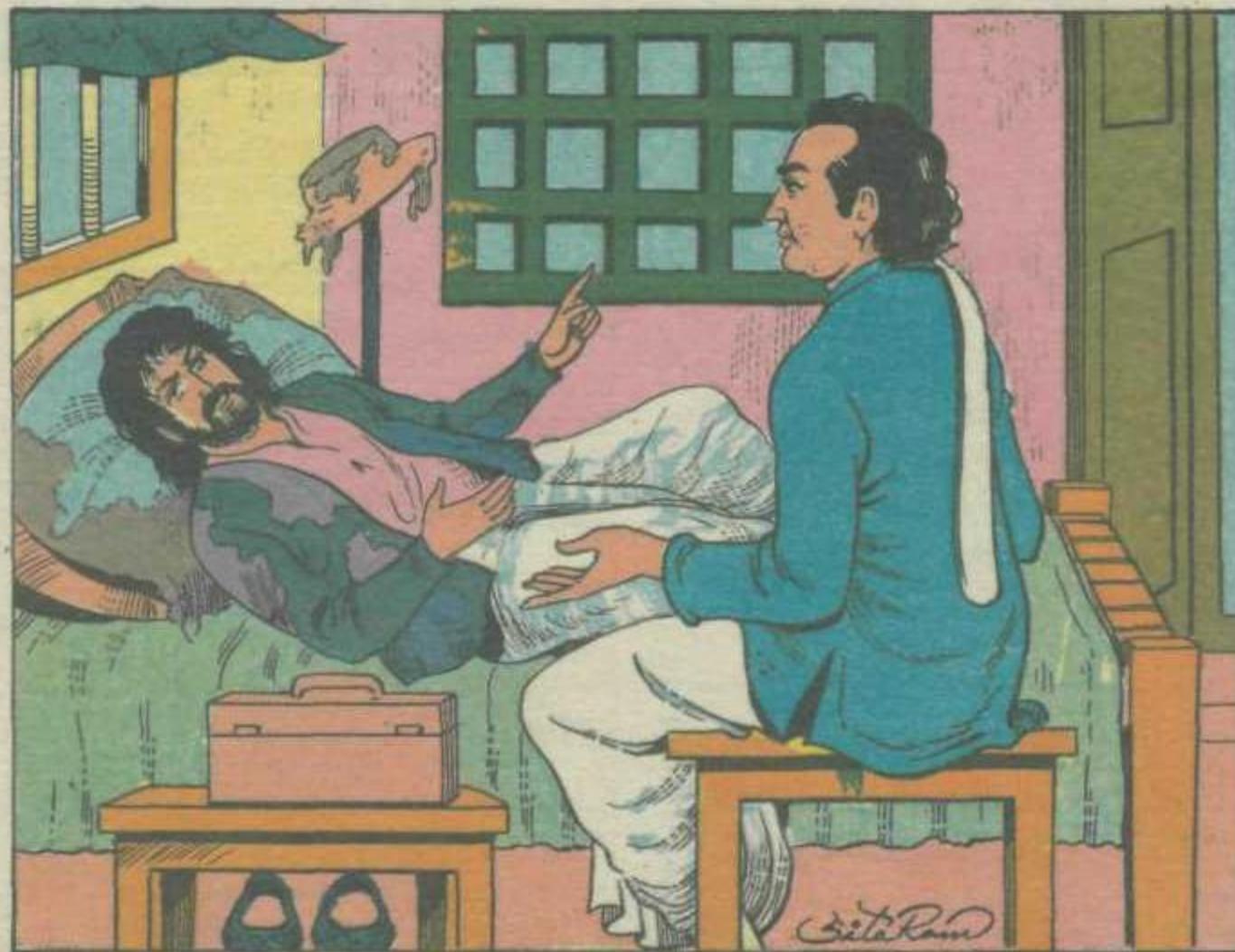
Gobar Chand of Ratnapur was as though under a solemn oath. And what was that? You may ask. Well, it was never to do anything which will please his neighbours.

One day he fell ill. The village physician was called. He was surprised to learn that Gobar did not take bath except once in a month, rarely had a haircut, and the clothes he wore had never been washed. His shoes and cap looked tattered.

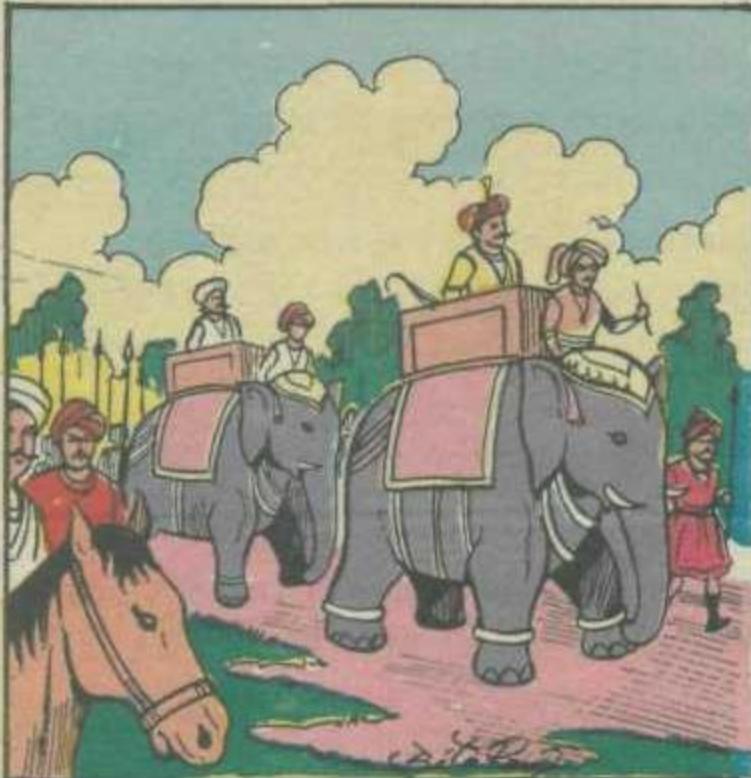
"You have enough money to hire a servant to wash your clothes. Why do you wear them unclean?" asked the physician. Gobar made no reply.

"If you bathed, cut your hair, shaved, put on a new hat and a new pair of shoes, you would look beautiful!" observed the physician.

Under the impact of his fever, Gobar spoke out, "Doctor, that is what I don't want to do! Why, for nothing, present a beautiful scene to these worthless neighbours?"

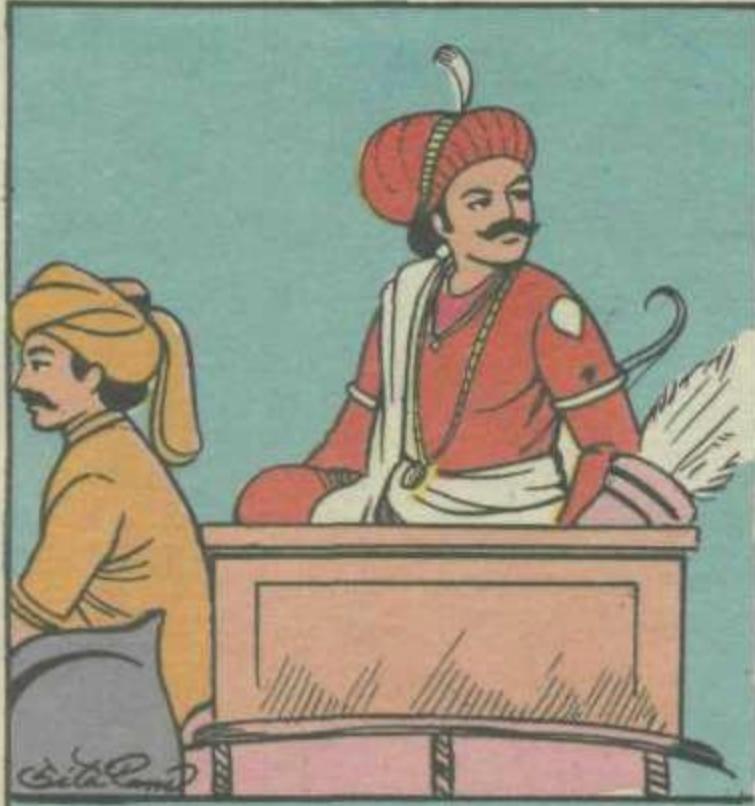
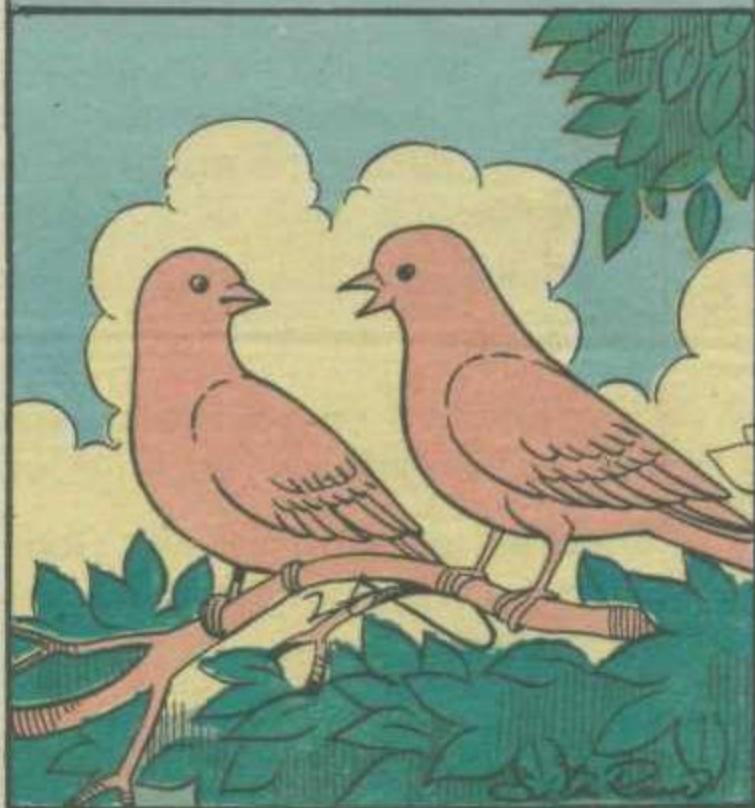


FOREST WITHOUT BEASTS



Emperor Akbar was fond of hunting deer, tiger and other animals. Whenever he went out on a hunting expedition, he asked Birbal to accompany him.

On the top of a tree were seen two birds. They sat chirping. Birbal noticed them.

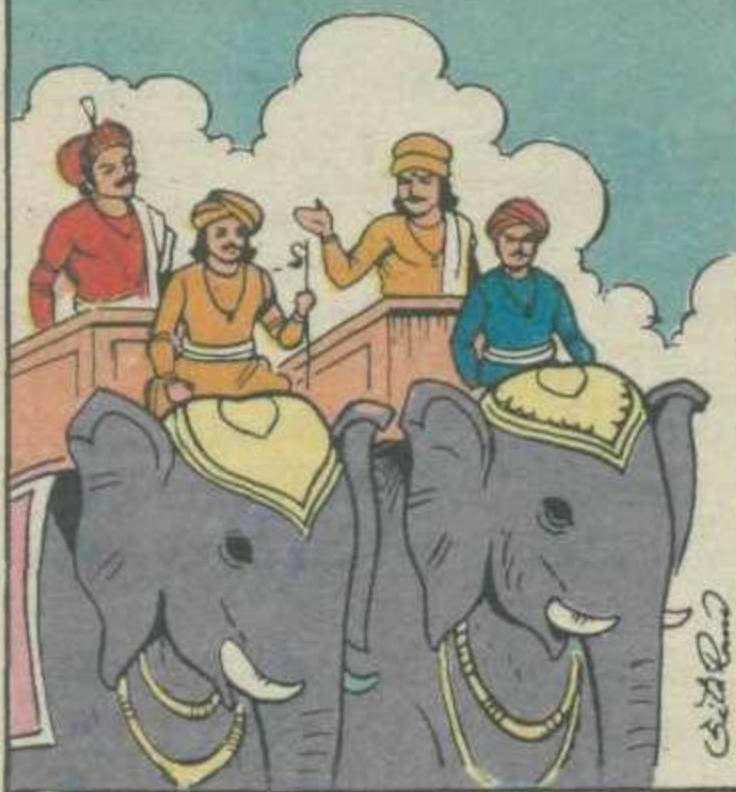


Akbar found that Birbal's elephant was not following his elephant. He looked back to find out the reason.

He saw that Birbal's elephant had stopped under a tree. Birbal was gazing at the birds.



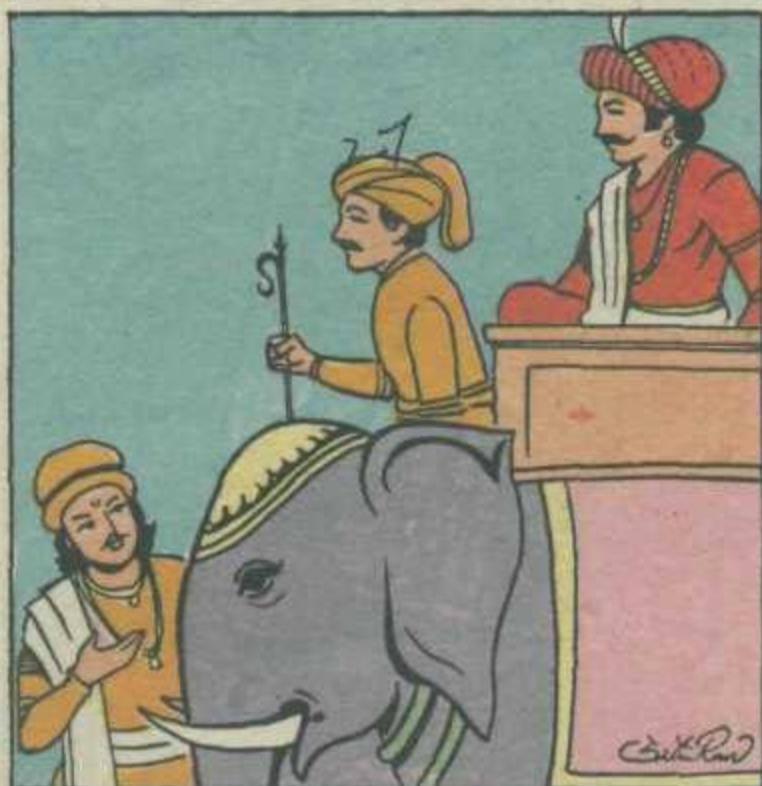
When Birbal saw that Akbar was observing him, he came closer to the emperor. "I was listening to the birds," he explained.



"Can there be a forest without beasts?" asked Akbar. "My lord! That is what I too am wondering at. Let me listen again," said Birbal. He got down and went back to the tree.



"What do they say?" asked the emperor. Birbal replied, "One bird is demanding as dowry a beast-less forest for its son's marriage with the other's daughter."



Birbal then returned to the emperor and said, "The bride's father says that he can give such a dowry in a year—for the emperor will kill all the beasts!" The emperor realised his folly and gave up hunting.



STORY OF

BUDDHA

—By Manoj Das

(The Buddha, after initiating innumerable people to his path, visited Kapilavastu, his birthplace and made his father King Suddhodana, his step-brother Nanda, and his son Rahula, accept his faith.)

THE MASTER AND THE BEREAVED MOTHER

Thousands followed the Buddha when he left Kapilavastu for Rajagriha. Years ago he had left the city hiding himself in the darkness of the night. His charioteer was his sole companion. Today the entire population of the city was in the streets to bid farewell to him. They showed

their love and respect for him through smiles and tears and a reverential silence, broken occasionally by chanting of his name and praise.

Soon after the Buddha reached Rajagriha a nobleman greeted him. "Sir," he said. "I am Sudatta, a merchant from Shra-



vasti. I was here on business. I understand that you like to spend the monsoon at some lonely place. May I invite you to come to Shravasti? I will keep a place ready for you."

The Buddha nodded his consent. Sudatta was delighted. He hastened back to Shravasti and began looking for a place fit for the great soul's abode. On the outskirts of Shravasti lay a beautiful park. Sudatta went to its owner, Prince Jeta, and offered to buy it from him.

"I am in no hurry to sell my lands to anybody!" said the prince, perhaps a little irritated at the proposal.

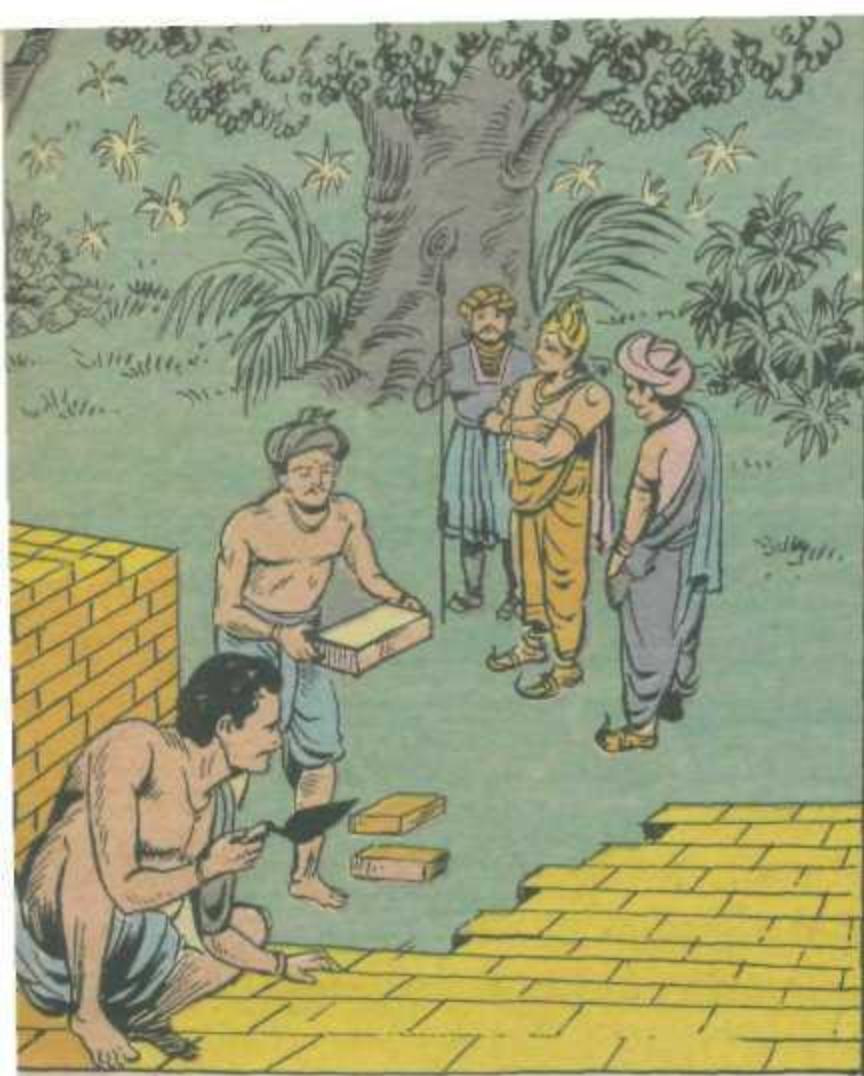
"I know that. But it would be noble of you to sell the park to me because I need it for a truly noble purpose!" said Sudatta and he reported to the prince how the Buddha had agreed to pass the rainy season there. The prince did not seem moved.

"I suppose, you wouldn't mind covering the whole park with gold for such a great guest!" observed the prince.

"I wouldn't mind, indeed. But the Buddha is an ascetic. He would not need a golden park!" said Sudatta.

"But I would like you to prove that you are prepared to offer him a golden park. In fact, I will





give the park to you only if you can cover it with gold!" said the whimsical prince.

"I will try to fulfil the condition," said Sudatta and he left as Prince Jeta laughed behind him.

But soon news reached the prince that cart-loads of gold plates were being used to cover the park. The prince hurried to the spot. He was dazed at what he saw. The merchant had used all the gold he had and bought all the gold he could buy. With that he had covered the whole of the park, but one area. He was trying for more gold to complete the work.

Prince Jeta, amazed at the

merchant's devotion to the Buddha, embraced him and said, "Please allow me to complete the work." He covered the remaining part of the park with gold and also built a house and a beautiful arch for the Buddha.

The park, which came to be called Jetavana after its owner's name, became the Buddha's abode for a season. Although he did not encourage people flocking to him during this period, seekers nevertheless came to him with their problems and questions.

One morning a young mother came running to the Buddha, crying and looking desperate. What she laid at the Master's feet was her dead child. "O Enlightened One! People say that you have great powers. Bring my child back to life!"

The Buddha looked at the lady with compassion. She was Kissa Gautami. He knew her when she was a sweet child herself. She had married, had become a mother and had now experienced the pang of losing her child—like any other human being thrown into the whirlpool of life.

"Tell me, can you bring my child back to life?" the young mother asked amidst her sobs.



"I can, my little sister, provided you can bring me a handful of mustard seed..."

Kissa's tearful face brightened up. "A handful? I can produce a mountain of mustard seed before you!" she said excitedly. She was ready to go.

"Only a handful would do. But you must bring it from a house which has never known death. That is a must," said the Buddha.

"I will." The fond mother ran away in a frenzy.

The Buddha gave his attention to others. Hours passed. It was the hour of the sunset. Kissa Gautami was seen trudging towards the park, tired, but with

a sad smile on her face.

The Buddha kept gazing at her. She knelt down before him. A moment passed in silence.

"What happened to your child's dead body?" asked the Buddha.

"I offered it to the flames, my Master!"

"And what happened to the mustard seed from a house that had never known death?"

"I found no such mustard seed, Master, for by and by I realised that there was no house which had never been invaded by death."

"That is right, my sister. Death comes to all the living creatures.



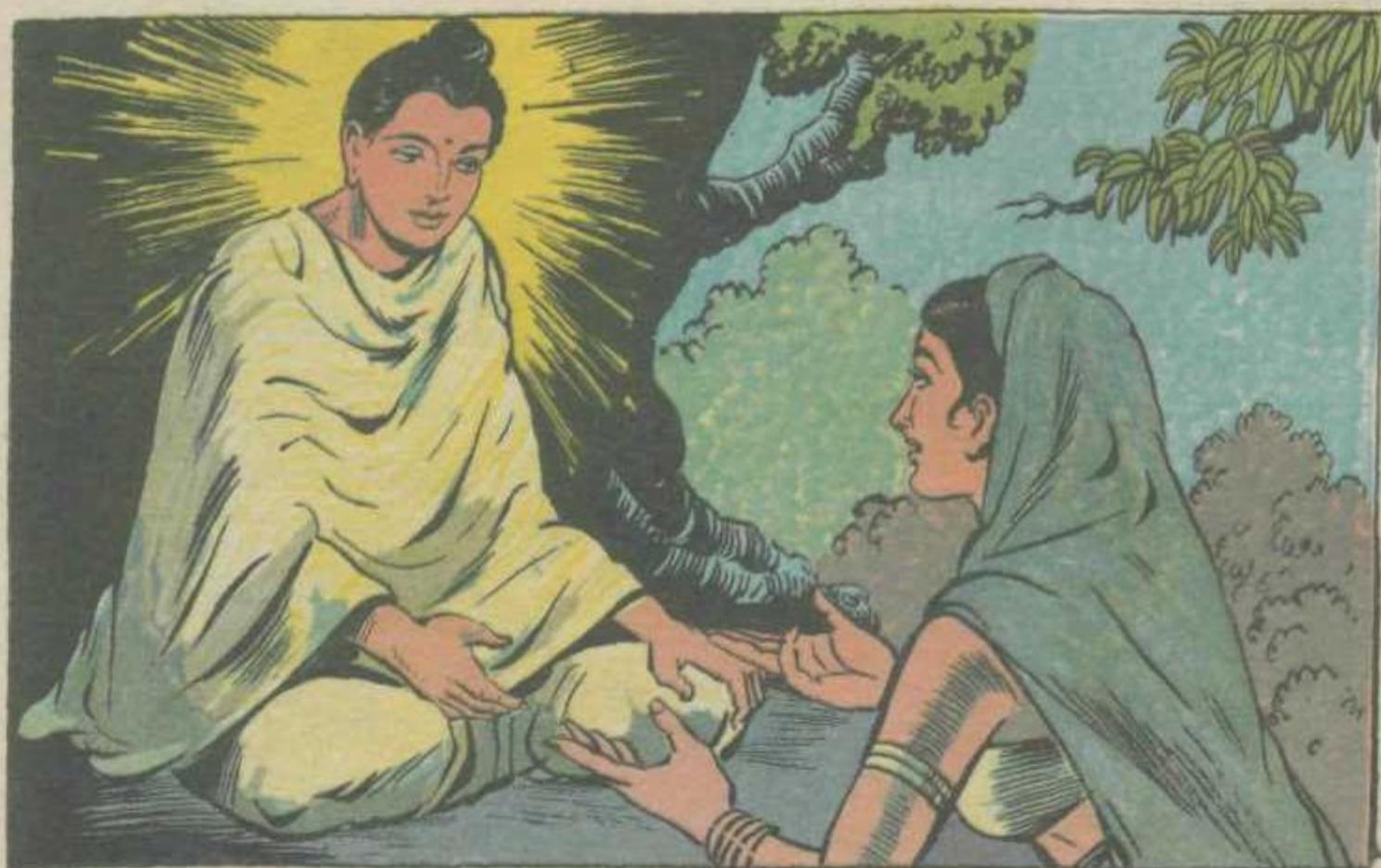
You are not the first mother to weep over a dead child. There have been countless mothers like you and there would be countless mothers like you. One knows that death is unavoidable. Even then one hopes that he or she alone can avoid it—and wishes that his or her dear ones should not fall a prey to it. This is ignorance. If one is a little wise, one should strive to free oneself from the clutches of such ignorance!"

Sitting in silence in the Buddha's presence, Kissa Gautami felt that a great change came over her. She had begun to see the

light of truth.

And the close disciples of the Buddha marvelled at the way their Master handled different people. Here was a lady almost mad with the tragedy that had struck her. Had the Buddha told her straight away that her child cannot be brought back to life, she would not have appreciated it. For, the tragedy seemed to her to have fallen only to her lot! Through her toil, moving from one house to another, she realised that what she had experienced was a common phenomenon.

—To continue



CHANDAMAMA SUPPLEMENT-15

TREASURY OF KNOWLEDGE

WHO IS HE?

It was a wide wide stretch of sand on the seacoast. There was no village nearby. A king, with a few of his bodyguards, was galloping along the coast.

Suddenly a hoof of his horse struck against something hard and the clash resulted in a spark. How can a spark come out of the sand? The king pulled the reins of his horse. So did his followers. The king had a close look at the object hidden in the sand. It appeared to be a beautifully carved stone. The king was curious. He ordered his bodyguards to dig there. He was surprised to see the top of a temple emerging from the sands. He brought more people to the scene. The digging continued for a long time. What emerged slowly was a huge temple. It became obvious that a great king in the past had built the temple; the engineers had gathered sands around it as it rose higher and higher, in order to carry the stone to the upper tiers of the temple. For some unknown reasons the sands were not removed. Time had passed and the temple had been forgotten!

Who, according to the legend is the king who discovered the temple? Which is the temple?

DO YOU KNOW?

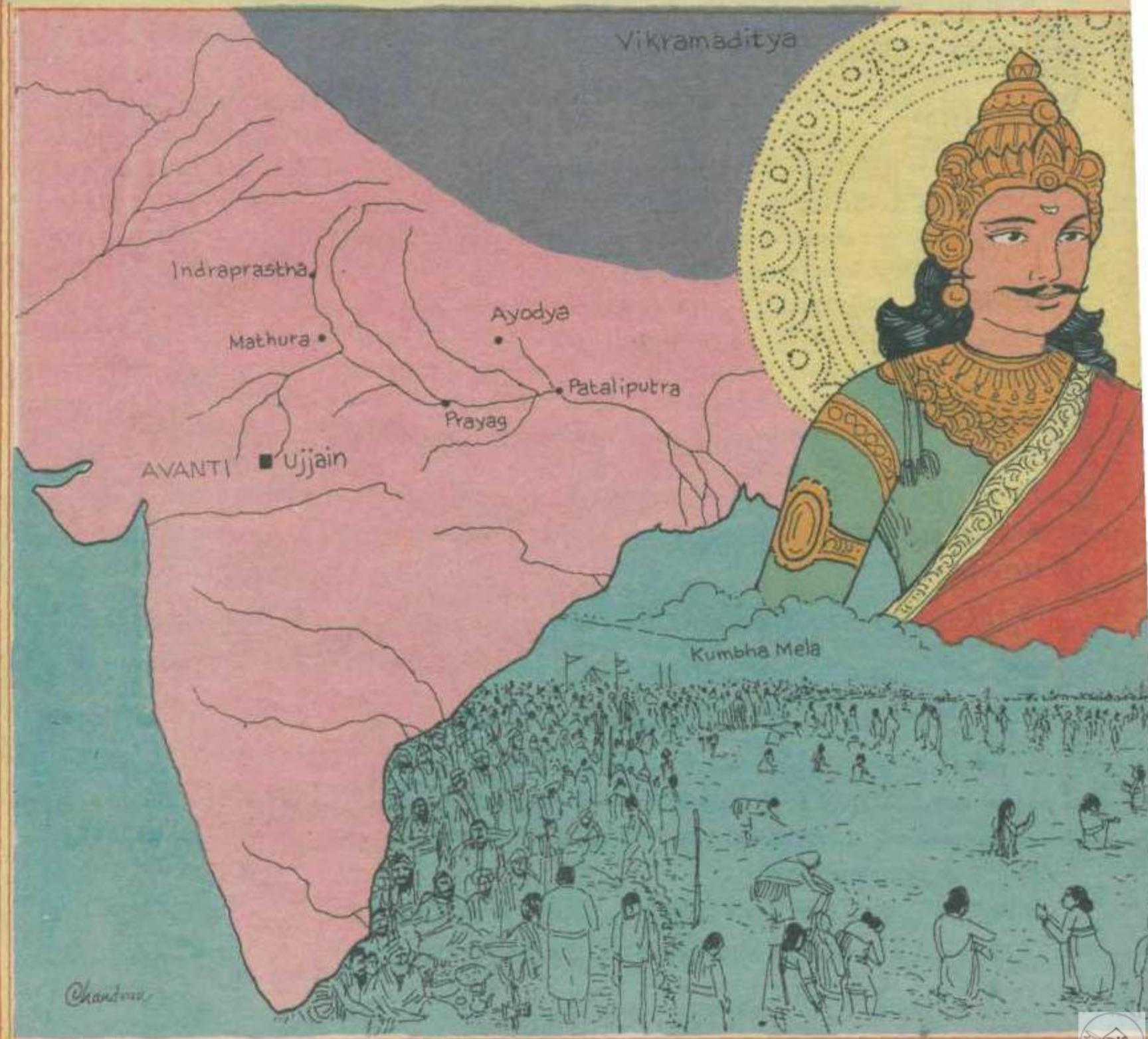
1. Where are to be found the Shaking Minarets, so named because if you shake one, the other one will shake on its own?
2. Which city of India is known as the "City of Lakes"?
3. What is the name of the gulf between the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea?
4. Which famous island is situated in this gulf?
5. What is the institution for which the island is famous?
6. What is very special about this institution?



AVANTI AND UJJAIN

Avanti or Avantika was a famous kingdom during the Mahabharata War and even before that. There was also a time when it was divided into two kingdoms. The

southern Avanti had its capital at Mahismati, the place known as Mandhata today. Ujjain or Ujjayini was the capital of the northern Avanti. This ancient





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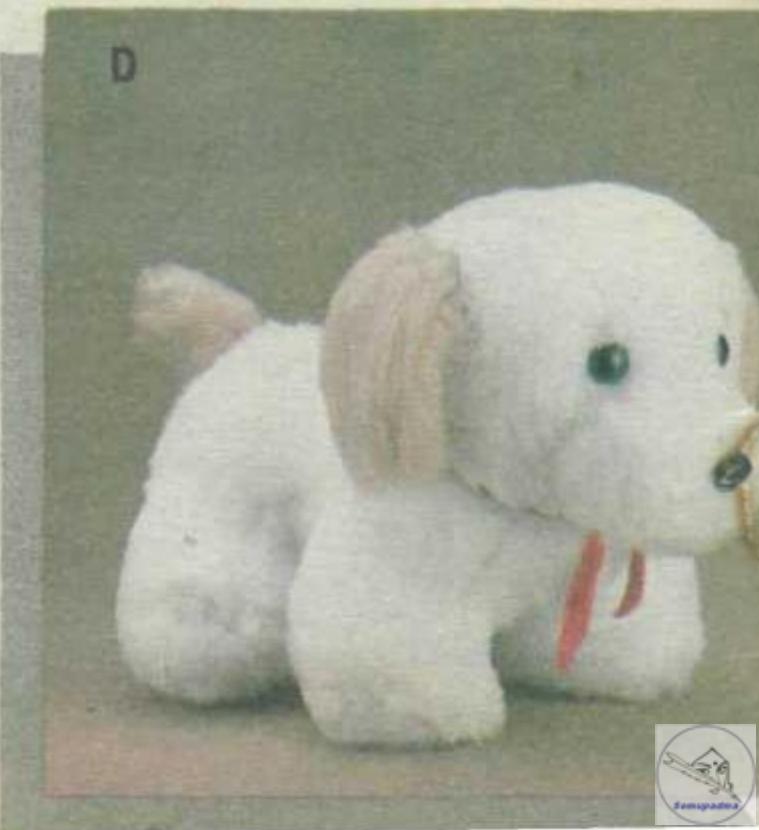
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D. BOW WOW:

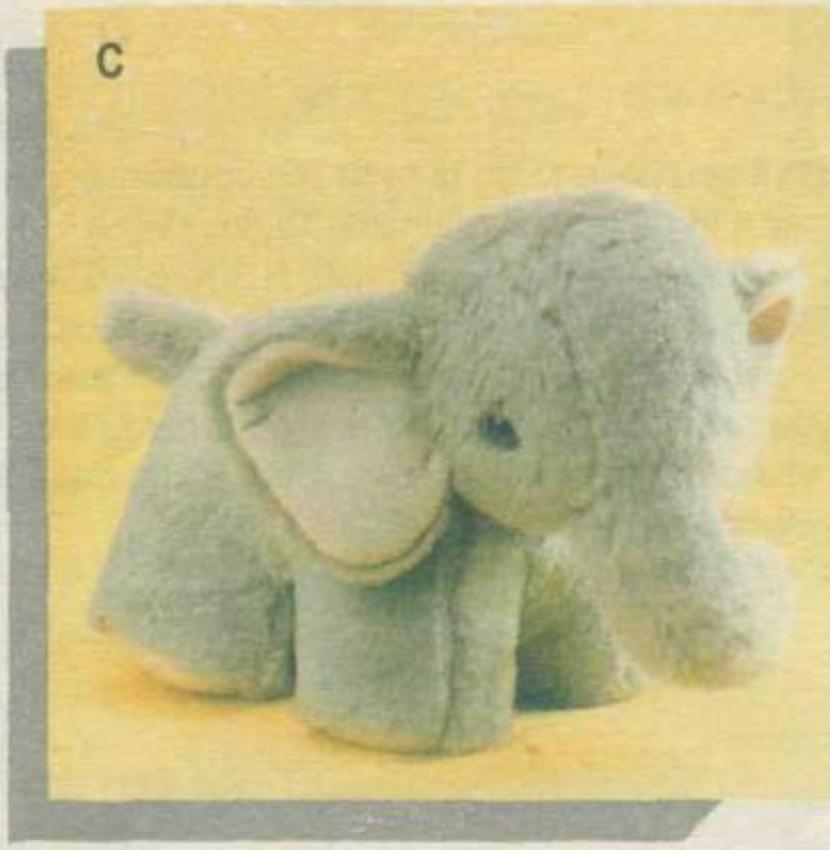
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NEWS FLASH

city retains its old name and is situated in modern Malwa of Madhya Pradesh.

We learn from the early Buddhist books that more than two thousand and five hundred years ago, India was divided into sixteen regions (**sodasa janapada**). Avanti was one of them.

Ujjain is not only a very ancient city, but also it is one of the seven sacred cities of India.

The legendary King Vikramaditya is said to have ruled from Ujjain. It is here that he had his court with the famous nine celebrities, including the great poet, Kalidasa. The **Meghadutam**, the immortal poem of Kalidasa, gives a charming picture of the city and the river Sipra (**Kshipra**) which flows by it. He also speaks of a great temple that dominated the city, the temple of Lord Shiva known as Mahakala. The famous Kumbha Mela takes place here every twelve years.

Before ascending the throne, Asoka was the governor of Ujjain, deputed by the Maurya dynasty.



Triumph of Sanskrit

India's ancient language, Sanskrit, is creating new interest all over the world. Mr. Vyaas Houston and Mr. David Lavine of U.S.A. have prepared a computer programme which would make it quite easy even for the Westerners to learn to pronounce, read and chant correctly in 20 hours!

Shakespeare's Theatre

When in London, every Shakespeare-lover would like to see the theatre for which Shakespeare worked and wrote his plays—The Globe Theatre. But where was it? It had just vanished leaving no trace behind. It had caught fire while staging Shakespeare's Henry VIII in 1613. It had been rebuilt, but it was never the same attraction again, for Shakespeare died in 1616. At last the Globe Theatre, lying buried under an abandoned car park on the river Thames, had just been discovered. No doubt, it will become a great attraction in times to come.



LET US EXPLORE THE WORLD OF LITERATURE

1. What was the real name of Maxim Gorky?
2. What was the real name of George Orwell?
3. What was the real name of Saki?
4. Who loved to write poems with his pet Siamese cat perched on his shoulder?
5. Which famous poet loved to travel with a number of pet animals and birds?
6. Which famous fairytale writer was a great linguist?

ANSWERS

WHO IS HE?

King Galamadhav; The Jagannath temple at Puri.

GENERAL KNOWLEDGE

1. In Ahmedabad
2. Udaipur
3. The Gulf of Mannar
4. Rameswaram
5. The temple of Lord Shiva
6. Lord Rama is believed to have established the deity here.

WORLD LITERATURE

1. Alexei Pyeshkov
2. Eric Blair
3. Hector Hugh Munro
4. Edgar Allan Poe
5. Lord Byron. He travelled with ten horses, eight huge dogs, five cats, an eagle, a crow and a falcon.
6. Jacob Grimm (1785-1863)



THE BIG VERSUS THE SMALL

Long long ago, in a forest of Africa lived a huge animal named Ghaun Ghaun. Of course, he had other names too. But Ghaun Ghaun is the name it liked most, for it sounded good and the sound was similar to its roar.

Ghaun Ghaun, surely, was a kind of tiger, but four times bigger than the tiger you or I have ever seen. With his size and thunder-like voice, he terrorised all the other animals in the forest. Always he had his way.

Once Ghaun Ghaun was sleep-

ing on a hill when it began to rain. He grew furious. He looked at the clouds and shouted, "You flying loafers! Didn't you see that I, the great Ghaun Ghaun, was lying in the open? How dare you drench me?"

"Well, Ghaun Ghaun, if we look into everybody's convenience before we start raining, we can never rain. For, if you are lying in the open today, a lion is getting married tomorrow and a boar is throwing a feast day after tomorrow! We have to act





according to our rules and not according to the whims of the different creatures!"

"Shut up! Who needs your rain at all? Get out I say, get out!" roared Ghaun Ghaun.

"Thank you. We can use our precious water elsewhere!" said the clouds and they flew away at double speed.

There was no rain for a full year—and then for yet another year! The waterfalls in the forest became mere sprinklers. The lakes became pools. By and by all of them completely dried up.

Only one lake which was at the centre of the forest, still had water in it. All the animals of the

forest flocked there to quench their thirst. Ghaun Ghaun too was obliged to go there. But he suspected that this last lake too would dry up before long. There were many crabs in the lake. Ghaun Ghaun summoned their chief and told him, "This is my lake. No other creature should be allowed to drink from it. Right?"

"Right, Ghaun Ghaun, Sir!"

"And tell the other crabs who are in the lake itself not to drink too much water!"

"Right, Ghaun Ghaun, Sir!"

Ghaun Ghaun went away. Soon the jackal came to drink the water. "Don't you touch the water. It belongs to Ghaun Ghaun!" the head crab cautioned him.

The jackal slunk away, but waited under a bush.

Soon there came the boar. He too was warned by the crab. And he too retreated—and took position near the jackal.

Then came the wolf, followed by the boar, followed by the tiger, followed by the lion, followed by the elephant. The crab told all of them to refrain from touching the lake. And all of them stood on the bank, not knowing what to do. They were awfully thirsty; at the same time they were not

prepared to arouse Ghaun Ghaun's wrath.

Then came the little rabbit. He was rather hard of hearing. He straight went to the water and had a sip of it. The moment the other animals saw the little rabbit defying the ban, they all rushed to the water and quenched their thirst.

They had just finished drinking when Ghaun Ghaun arrived. At his terrific roar, the animals trembled and felt like running away, but nobody was prepared to prove himself a coward before the others. So, all stood, waiting to see what would happen next.

Ghaun Ghaun had seen them

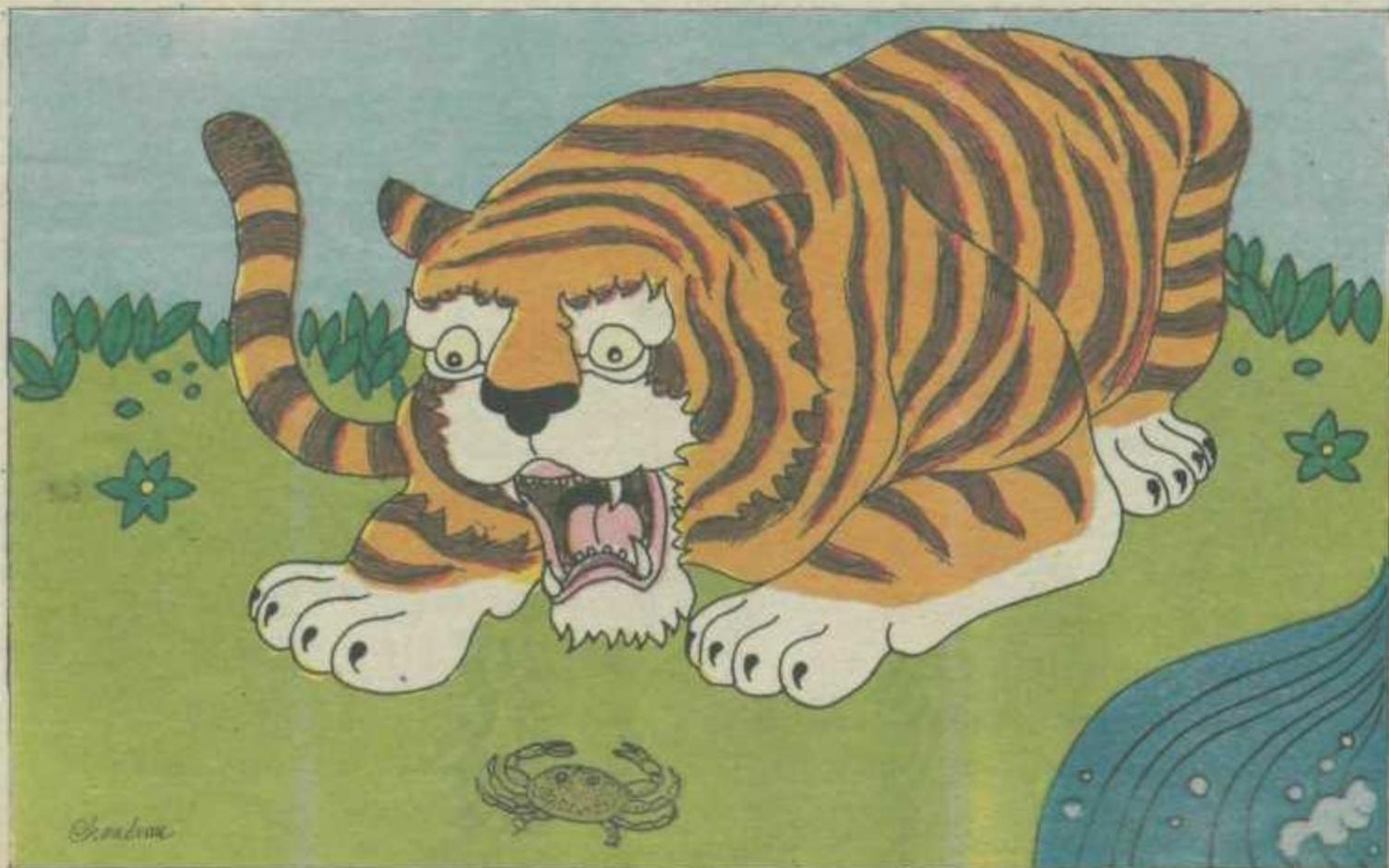
drinking. He wanted to punish them. But he had never seen so many of them together. He could thrash any one or even two of them. But it was risky to attack the tiger, the lion and the elephant at one go!

But he must show his authority!

"You head crab! Did I not order you to guard my lake?" he demanded.

"I warned all of them to keep away, Sir, but they disregarded my order!" explained the crab apologetically.

"You did not warn them properly, I am sure. You must die. I will chew you. Come out. Let



everybody know what happens to one who does not obey me," said Ghaun Ghaun.

The crab crawled up to the bank, reluctantly.

Suddenly the rabbit said something. It was not audible to Ghaun Ghaun. The elephant lifted the rabbit with his trunk and placed the gentle creature on his own back.

Said the rabbit, "Ghaun Ghaun, Sir, anybody can chew up a crab. Even the creatures called men who are so much afraid of us that they always live outside the forest, chew up crabs. We would like the great Ghaun Ghaun to swallow the crab instead of chewing it up!"

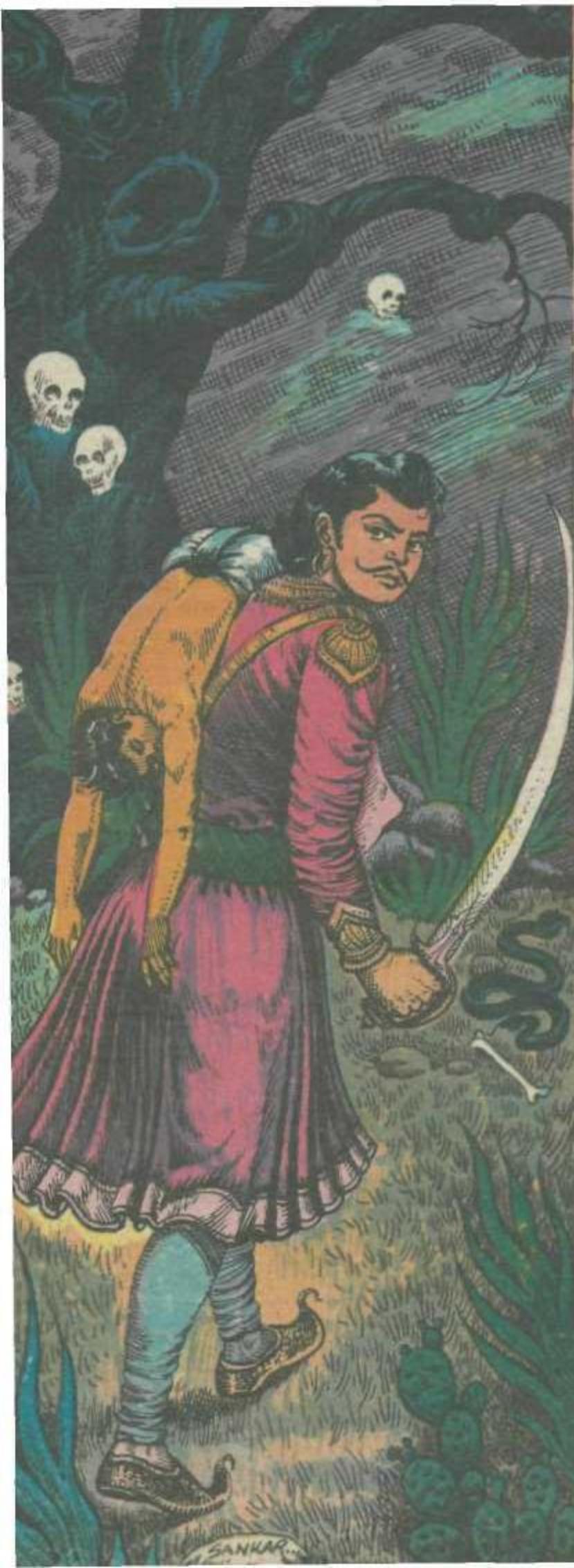
"I accept your suggestion!" said Ghaun Ghaun and he lifted the crab and swallowed it. Then

he surveyed the animals gravely. But soon his face looked distorted with pain. He rolled on the ground and groaned. It went on for fifteen minutes. Then the crab was found coming out of Ghaun Ghaun's tummy, cutting his way with his sharp claws. Ghaun Ghaun lay still. It was dead.

The animals danced around the crab and the rabbit. The two little creatures could put an end to the biggest and most ferocious creature in the forest—Ghaun Ghaun the tyrant.

The animals then climbed the hill and prayed to the clouds to be kind to them. The clouds returned to the sky over the forest. It began raining profusely. The lakes were soon full. The waterfalls began to murmur and then roar!





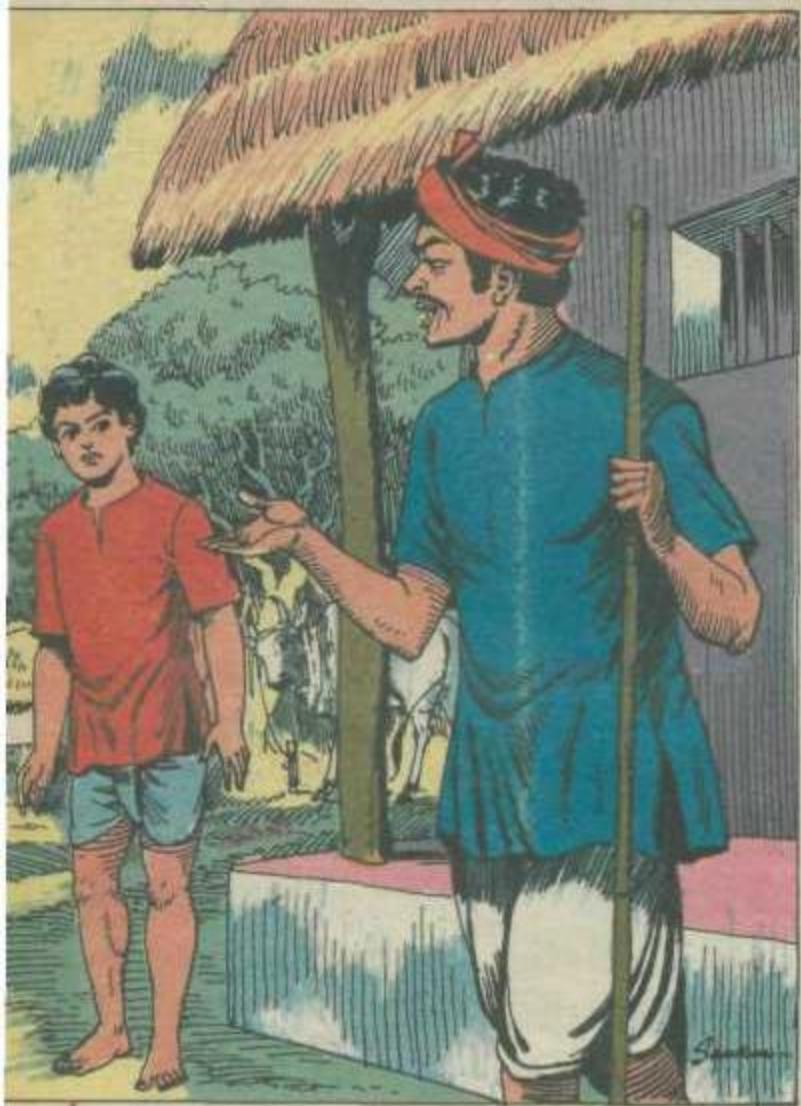
NEW TALES OF KING
VIKRAM AND THE VAMPIRE

STRANGE BLESSINGS

Dark was the night and weird the atmosphere. It rained from time to time. Gusts of wind shook the trees. At the intervals of thunderclaps and the moaning of jackals could be heard the eerie laughter of spirits. Flashes of lightning showed fearful faces.

But King Vikram swerved not. He climbed the ancient tree once again and brought the corpse down. However, as soon as he began crossing the desolate cremation ground with the corpse lying on his shoulder, the vampire that possessed the corpse spoke, "O King, no doubt, you are a daring person. I do not know who is it that has inspired you to brave the rainy night and face the spirits here. Is he a rishi? But I can tell you that the blessings of rishis are not always effective. Let me illustrate my point to you through an incident. Pay attention to my narration. That might bring you some





relief."

The vampire went on: In the kingdom of Mayur lived a farmer named Dharmadas. His only son, Vinay, was a good-natured boy, but he was not interested in studies. Dharmadas was not the kind of man to chide or punish his son. He waited with patience. When the boy completed twelve years of age, he called him and said, "My son, I understand that you cannot qualify as a good student. But you should not waste your time. Idleness is a sin. Better look after our cattle. Take them to the pasture and watch them and bring them back home. Begin doing this from this

afternoon."

Vinay obeyed his father. He led the cattle to the vast grass-fields bordering the forest. He relaxed under a tree and soon fell asleep.

It was already sundown when he woke up. He looked searchingly here and there, but did not find his cattle. He was shocked. How can he return home without the animals?

He thought that the cattle might have strayed into the forest. He entered the forest to look for them. The forest was quite fascinating to him. His mother used to tell him that there were hermits in the forest who could do much good to people with whom they were pleased.

Vinay wondered if he could be lucky enough to meet one such hermit. Lo and behold, his eyes fell on a rishi meditating under a tree.

Vinay tiptoed to his presence and stood in silence, his heart filled with reverence. A little while later the rishi opened his eyes and smiled at the boy. Vinay bowed to him.

"You seem to be a brave boy. It is about to grow dark. But you are not afraid of being in the forest. Do you have any pro-

blem?" asked the rishi.

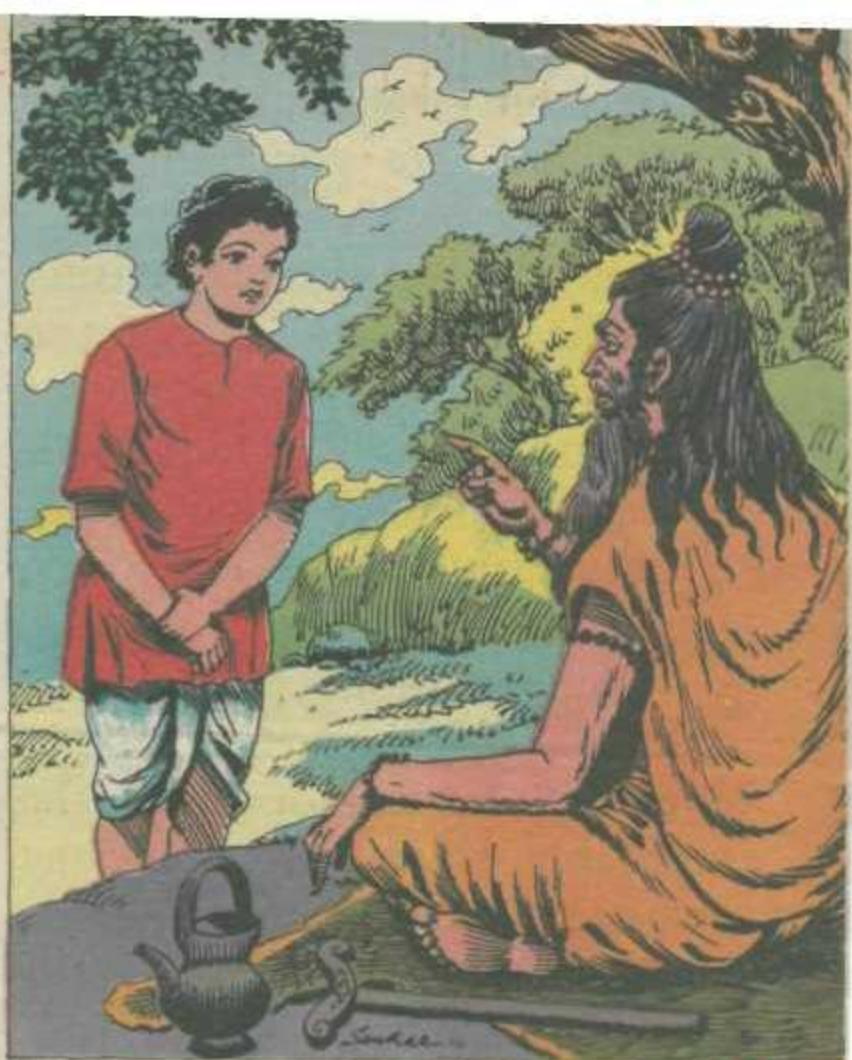
Vinay was overwhelmed by the kindness in the rishi's voice. He fumbled out, "Sir, I led our cattle to the fields. But I can't find a single cow! I don't know what happened to them!"

The rishi shut his eyes for a moment and then said, "My son, your cows are already back in their shed behind your house. Go home. But keep this flower with you. It will protect you from any dangerous animal."

Vinay took the flower with humility and prostrated himself to the rishi and said, "Sir, will you not pass on some magic to me so that I can do something wonderful? I failed to study well."

Said the rishi, "My son, magic would not help you to make any true progress. By true progress I mean the development of your consciousness, when you will be able to achieve peace and joy in any circumstance. Pray to God. Bow to Mother Saraswati and concentrate in your studies, I bless you. You will do well in your studies."

Vinay returned home and did as the rishi had asked him to do. Soon he found himself quite interested in studies. He became



the best student in his school.

"My son, one can be truly satisfied only when one's soul's craving is fulfilled. But this does not mean that you should not try to achieve anything with the help of your mind and body. Go to Amaravati and meet a wrestler and warrior named Jwalamukh. Tell him that you are sent by me. Let him teach his art to you."

Vinay followed the rishi's instruction. Jwalamukh was happy to find in him a very sincere disciple. He remained with Jwalamukh for five years and completed his training.

One day a chieftain summoned him and said, "I have heard your



praise from Jwalamukh. I need a bodyguard like you. Will you join my service?"

Vinay did not give his decision immediately. Instead, he went to the rishi, and told him about the offer and asked, "O Master, is it to end up as a mere bodyguard of a chieftain that I learnt so much?"

"Oh no, my son, your learning will come to your greater help in due time. One cannot achieve the highest goal at once. Join the chieftain's service and wait for the next opportunity. My blessings are with you," said the rishi.

Vinay became the chieftain's bodyguard. A year passed. One

day the chieftain had for his guest the minister of the King of Mayur. The minister told the chieftain, "We need money for the people's welfare. But the king is not prepared to impose any new tax on the people. I don't know what to do."

Vinay who happened to be there, smiled. The minister observed it. Curious, he asked, "What made you smile?"

"Sir, the king and you have kept your eyes shut towards a great source of revenue!" observed Vinay.

"Is that so? What is that avenue?" asked the minister.

"Sir, for last two years more



than a hundred merchants from Malay are regularly visiting our land and selling a variety of goods. They make gifts to the city-chiefs and keep them pleased. The city-chiefs do not make any report about their activities to you or to the king's court. The merchants go without paying any tax to our government!"

The minister nodded. Next day, while taking leave of his host, he proposed to take Vinay with him as his adviser. The chieftain had no objection. Vinay accompanied the minister to the capital of Mayur.

One day a wizard appeared before the king. He inspired awe in all the courtiers. "O King!" he said, "I have achieved many supernatural powers. Now I wish to marry. Through my magic mirror I learnt that your daughter, the princess, is the most beautiful girl in the kingdom. I will like to marry her. Arrange for the ceremony."

The abrupt and absurd suggestion annoyed the king so much that he unsheathed his sword. But that was all he could do. The wizard raised his magic wand. At once the king's right hand was paralysed. He was stunned.

The wizard laughed wildly and





said, "Whoever will go against my will shall suffer like this. The princess shall remain unconscious. I will be back here after twelve days—on the moonless night. Only if you agree to marry your daughter to me, she will recover her senses."

The wizard left, after giving out another laugh. The king still could not move his right hand. Everybody was sad. The king said, "I wish somebody could kill the wizard before he visits us once again! If anybody could do it, I would marry the princess to him. He would also succeed me to the throne."

Vinay at once proceeded to

meet the rishi. "Oh great soul!" he told the rishi, "I am not satisfied even with my position of an adviser to the minister. Only if I could finish off the wizard, I would be so happy!"

"My son, you would not be happy even then. However, there is no harm in your doing this. I bless you. The wizard lives in a cave with three faces in the northern part of the forest, near a lake," said the rishi.

Vinay armed himself and reached the cave. He saw the wizard from his hiding. The wizard never parted from his magic wand. But once, while entering the lake for a bath, the wizard hid it in a hole.

Vinay was waiting for this opportunity. He pounced on the wizard. Both were locked in a wrestle. Vinay was a trained wrestler. He killed the wizard.

As soon as he did this, the princess recovered her senses and the king's hand also became normal. Vinay led the king and the minister into the forest and showed the dead body of the wizard.

The king was happy to perform Vinay's marriage with the princess.

A year after this the king died.



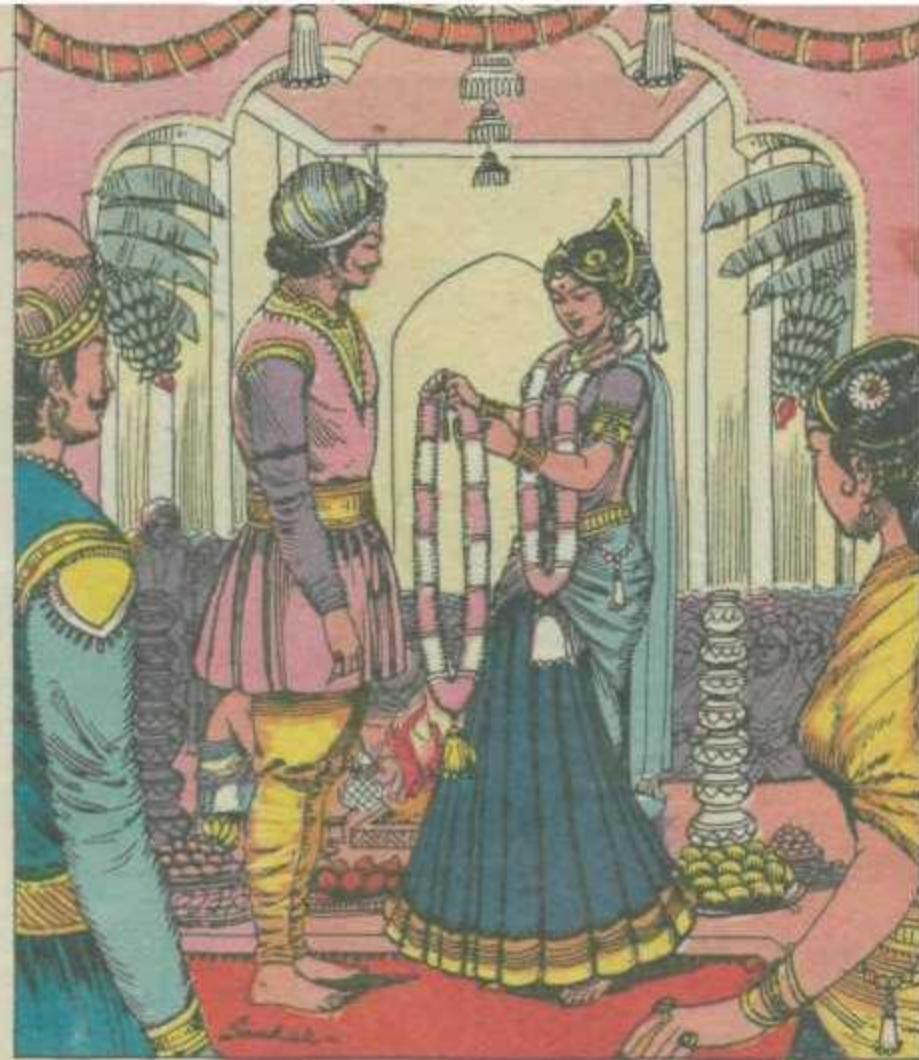
Vinay ascended the throne. Soon thereafter he met the rishi and said, "O great soul, I am going out on a military expedition. Kindly bless me."

The sage kept silent for a moment and then said, "I bless you."

King Vinay Dev attacked Kumudnagar, a kingdom to the east of Mayur. He proposed to conquer Sasipur after Kumudnagar. But he was defeated in the battle with Kumudnagar and he returned to his capital. After a month or so, he met the rishi and said, "My master, bless me once again."

The rishi blessed him. King Vinay Dev chose his wife's cousin to succeed him to the throne and himself retired into the forest to do Sadhana.

The vampire paused for a moment and then, in a challenging tone, demanded of King Vikram, "O King, every time the rishi's blessings helped Vinay to achieve his goal. But how was he defeated in his military expedition despite the blessings of the rishi? And knowing fully well that the rishi's blessings were effective no longer, why did he seek his blessings once again? O King, answer me if you can.



Should you keep mum despite your knowledge of the answer, your head would roll off your neck."

King Vikram answered forthwith: "The blessings of truly spiritual sages are not meant for material or selfish gains. They are meant for one's inner progress. As long as one's material achievement helps one in one's inner progress, the blessings of the sages ensure such achievements. But once that phase is over, the blessings directly work in the person's consciousness. Vinay was inwardly ready for Sadhana. That is why the external achievements never satisfied





him. He was out for conquering one kingdom. Had he won a victory, he would have gone to conquer yet another kingdom. He would have tried to find satisfaction through such outward achievements, but he would have not found it. He would have continued to delude himself. That is why the rishi's blessings brought him defeat. Only then

Vinay understood the significance of the rishi's blessings. Since he was a true seeker within, though he had temporarily forgotten it, he woke up to his true need. Blessed by the rishi again, he took to Sadhana."

No sooner had King Vikram finished giving the answers than the Vampire, along with the corpse, gave him the slip.

GOOD AND THE....

Mother: Must I give you a chocolate for you to be good everytime? Your father is so good, yet he never demands chocolates!

Son: He is good-for-nothing, mother?



You read about the Indian Railways in the November issue. Here is the story of another vital institution.

THE POSTAL SERVICE



Whenever the Viceroy of India used to visit a city in India, a Camp Post Office would be opened there and the plate bearing the symbol of the British Administration with the inscription "H.E. The Viceroy's Camp Post Office" would be hung up.

In the story of communications the postal service plays a leading role. The need to remain in contact with his fellowmen is believed to have led even the Neolithic man to etching on stone and leaves. But postal service was originally a privilege of the king, to keep in touch with every corner of his kingdom. King Darius of Persia may be called the first Postmaster-General, for he is known to have maintained an efficient riding post as early as 6th century B.C.

The Mauryans adopted the pigeon post as mentioned in Kautilya's *Arthashastra*. Messages in *cachets* were tied to their feet, and the trained birds flew straight to the required destinations. Pigeons have rendered great service in many historical events and are still used in Orissa.

But the most dashing figure remains the mail runner who crosses fields, deserts, forests and hills to deliver our letters safely, and has been doing so for centuries. Ibn Batuta, an Arab traveller,





Victorian Letter box: a rare Letter Box of Cast Iron (manufactured by Massey & Co., Madras) in a hexagonal shape with canopy in the pattern of an ornamentally-designed Lotus, for use, in Travancore Anchals only, inscribed with the state's own emblem, the trunk elephant.

recounts the excellent system under the Tughlaqs. Horses and runners followed the relay system. Sentry boxes at strategic points housed runners. The approaching runner jingled a whip with bells attached to announce his coming to the next one. An excellent time saving device! Akbar introduced the camel post and bankers employed their own runners—the *Mahajan dak*.

By the coming of the British the system had progressed little beyond this. The British initially

employed private runners and established post offices in Madras and Bombay.

Warren Hastings appointed a Postmaster-General. A two anna copper coin was the charge per 100 miles. Even after the introduction of mail carts, *hurkaras* (runners) in Bengal had to pass jungle tracts, assisted by a drummer, two archers and torch-bearers.

An Act in 1837 abolished private post. 1854 saw the establishment of the postal service on a national level and on October 1, 1854 a half anna adhesive stamp was introduced all over India.

Modernisation of the three major systems of transport speeded delivery, increased circulation and reached hitherto isolated areas. The transit speed increased to 20 miles per hour by train. By 1867 a weekly sea-mail service commenced between Bombay and Europe. In the air mail service, Mr. Picquet's demonstration flight from Allahabad to Naini Junction on 18th February, 1911, carrying 6,500 letters was the first of its kind in the world! India also pioneered the use of air mail post card in 1931.



An important office which has the difficult task of sorting illegible addresses, or tracking down addressees who have left the city is the Dead Letter Office. If they fail to locate the addressee the contents of the parcel or letter are auctioned or destroyed after a specific period. A mini museum of varied objects!

The Post Office has undertaken several non-postal func-

Dak-Hurkara, the mail-runner of the last century. (a model exhibited in the Postal Museum, Calcutta.)



The first postage stamp of India in denomination of Half Anna depicting Queen Victoria.

tions over the years. The 19th century saw a shortage of banking facilities in rural areas. The post offices therefore acted as bankers and continue to support small savings accounts.

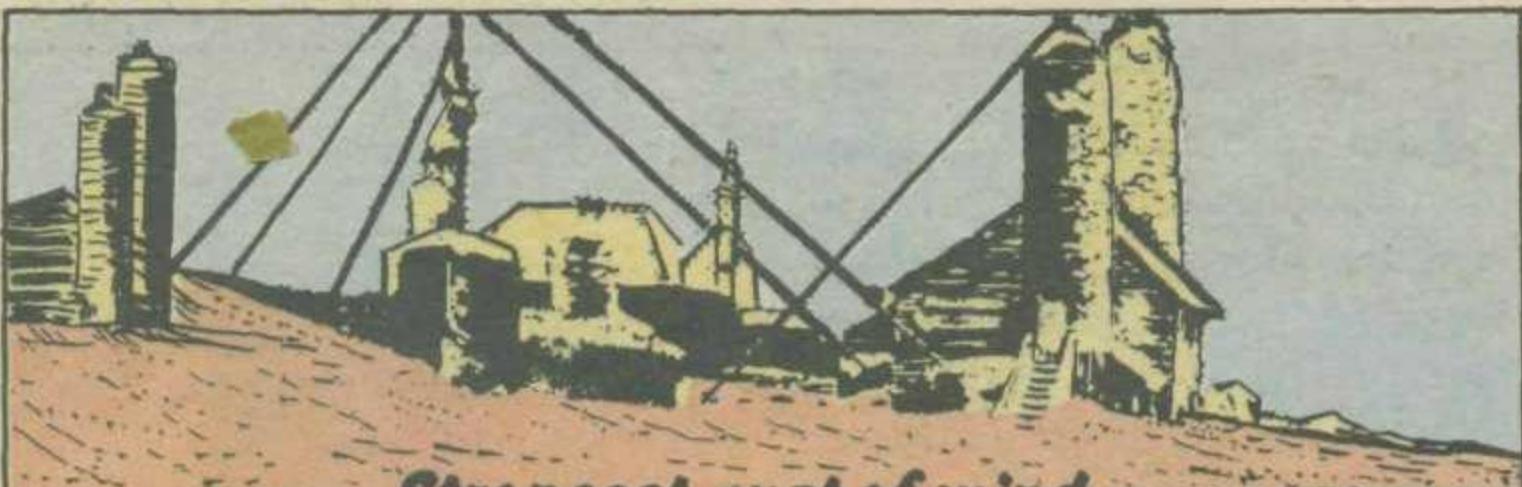
Another important merger was the combining of the Post and Telegraph offices. Originally the post offices accepted telegrams. When it expanded considerably it became the Post and Telegraph Office on April 1, 1914.

Till today the postal service retains that human contact which existed centuries ago. Even our latest development—the courier service delivers our mail personally. We always look forward to the postman whether he delivers good news or bad.

—by Uma K.



WORLD OF NATURE



Strongest gust of wind

THE "WORLD'S WORST WEATHER" IS CLAIMED BY MOUNT WASHINGTON OBSERVATORY, 6,262 FT (1,878.6M) ABOVE SEA LEVEL IN NEW HAMPSHIRE, USA. THE **HIGHEST RECORDED GUST OF WIND**—231 MPH (371 KM/H) WAS RECORDED HERE IN 1934.



THE MALE SOUTH AFRICAN HERCULES BEETLE IS SIX INCHES LONG, BUT ALMOST HALF OF THIS LENGTH CONSISTS OF TWO ENORMOUS HORNS. THEIR PURPOSE IS BELIEVED TO ATTRACT THE FEMALE.

HERCULES

THE MOST SOUTHERLY OCCURRENCE OF LAND LIFE ARE SPECIES OF LICHEN THAT APPEAR ON ROCKS ONLY 264 MILES FROM THE SOUTH POLE.

Most southerly life



FIRST TEST MATCH



THE FIRST TEST MATCH BETWEEN ENGLAND AND AUSTRALIA TOOK PLACE AT MELBOURNE IN 1877. AUSTRALIA WON BY 45 RUNS.



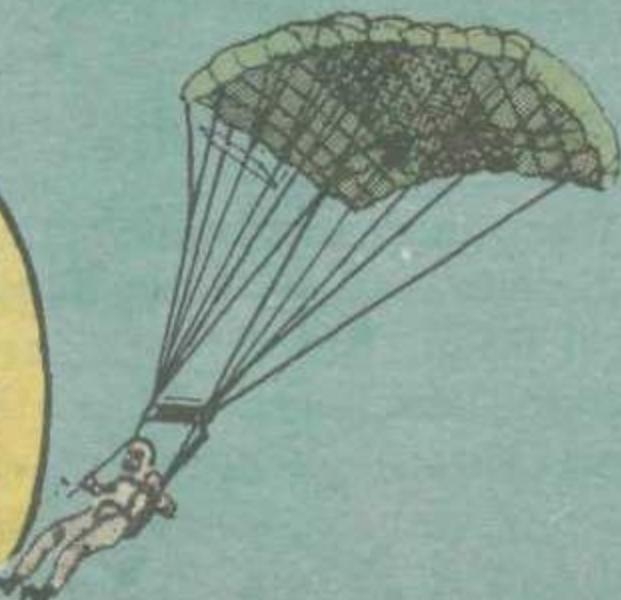
Olympic
General...

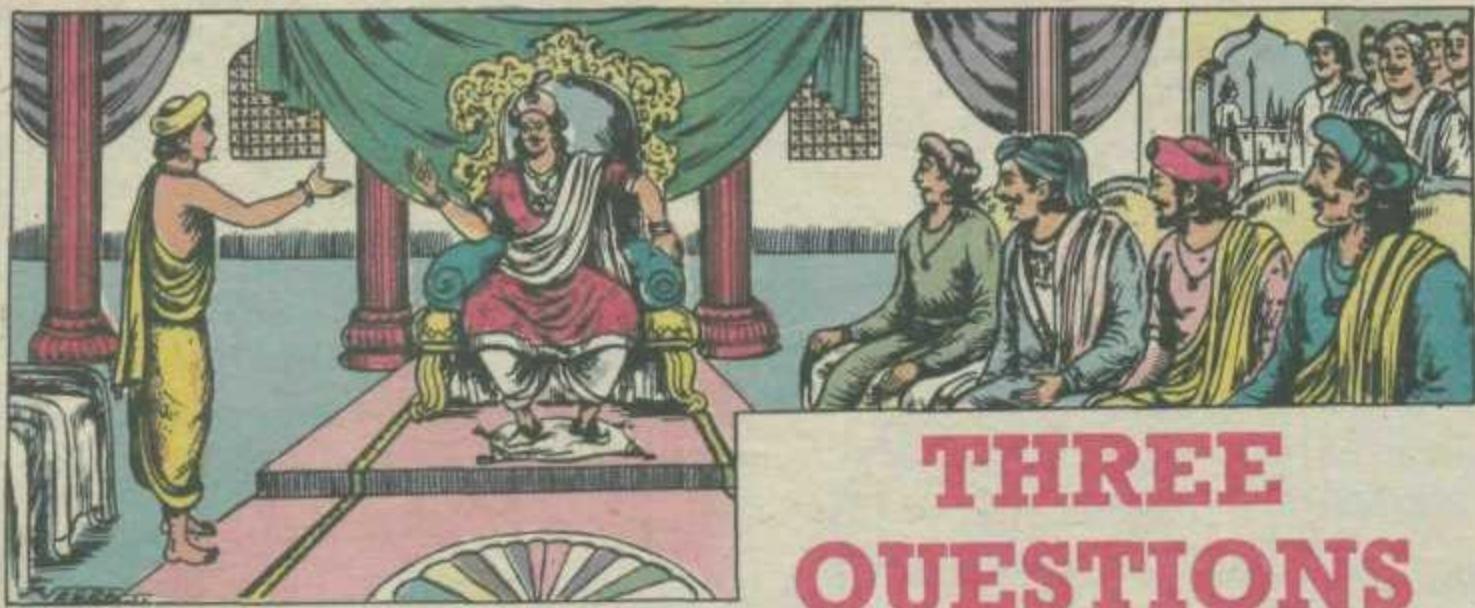
GENERAL GEORGE PATTON, FAMOUS AMERICAN WORLD WAR II COMMANDER, TOOK PART IN THE MODERN PENTATHLON

AT THE STOCKHOLM OLYMPICS OF 1912. HE WON THE FENCING EVENT AND WAS THIRD IN THE RIDING, RUNNING AND SWIMMING. IN THE SHOOTING HE SCORED 9 BULLS OUT OF 10.

PARACHUTING

SQUARE SHAPED 'CHUTES, KNOWN AS RAM-AIR MODELS, ARE USED IN THE SPORT OF PARACHUTING. THESE HAVE LOWER RATES OF DESCENT AND HIGHER FORWARD SPEEDS.





THREE QUESTIONS

The king of Chetan, Vichitradev, loved witty dialogues between scholars. He rewarded such people who could answer difficult or unusual questions.

Once the king visited Shilapur, the capital of the kingdom of Jadavdesh. He was accompanied by his queen and his son, Prince Shyamal. Although he did not say so, he desired to talk to Princess Sukanti of Jadavdesh. He had heard that Sukanti was a highly intelligent and wise girl. He wanted to see if he could arrange his son's marriage with her.

Vichitradev, naturally, stayed at Shilapur as the guest of the local king, Sukanti's father. Sukanti herself looked after the royal guests. Vichitradev was charmed with her conduct. After a fortnight, he told his host, "I

will be happy to have Sukanti as my daughter-in-law." Sukanti's father said, "I will be happy to have Shyamal as my son-in-law. But now that Sukanti has seen and talked to Shyamal, let me find out what she feels about the proposal."

When the king told his daughter, Sukanti, about the proposal, she said, "Father, the prince seems to be a good and intelligent young man. But I have to live with the queen, his mother, too. I must find out how she is."

"My child, the queen of Chetan rarely talks to anybody. She spends most of her time in meditation or silence. She has been our guest all these days, but apart from having strolls in the gardens, she has never joined her husband in any of the functions. How are you going to find out



what kind of lady she is?" asked the king.

"Father, her husband, King Vichitradev is fond of talking to me. I will find out through him," said Sukanti.

That day, in the afternoon, while talking to the princess, King Vichitradev said, "My daughter, I hear that like me you too enjoy witty dialogues. Why don't you ask me some questions? I will try to answer them to the best of my capacity."

"Surely, Your Majesty, it will be my great joy to profit by your wisdom. I will put three questions to you. Please give a thought to them and give me the answers either in the evening or tomorrow," said the princess.

"Very good. What are your questions?" asked the king.

"What is the subject on which even the wisest man acts or speaks like a fool? The second question is, what makes a mother most sad? And the last question is, what makes a sensible wife feel most humiliated?"

The king said that he would give the answers in the evening and retired to the guest-house.

In the evening he was back with the princess. He said, "My



daughter, I have thought out the answers to your questions."

"I am glad that you have. What are they?" asked the princess.

"The answer to your first question is, 'Father'. A father may be very wise and intelligent but he is generally blind to the defects of his son. If he hears that his son has done something grievously wrong, his first reaction is, 'No, my son could not have done so!' It is because the boy is *his* son. In other words, his own pride is injured when he receives any unwelcome report about his son. He wants to discount it or disbelieve it. This is

a human failing," said the king.

"Yes, Your Majesty. And what is the answer to my second question?" asked the princess.

"A mother becomes sad if she finds her daughter gone astray. It is because in the daughter she expects to see the continuity of her own nobility," answered the king.

"That is so, Your Majesty. And what is the answer to my third question?" asked the princess.

"My daughter! The answer to your third question is this: a sensible wife feels most humiliated when she publicly hears unkind and unjust comments on her husband. Mother Sati died because King Daksha spoke unkindly of her husband, Lord Shiva. That sentiment still holds

good in regard to noble wives," said the king.

"Thank you, Your Majesty. I am fully satisfied with your answers," said Princess Sukanti.

That night the princess told her father, "I find the queen of Chetan very wise."

"How did you find out that?" asked her father.

"From the answers King Vichitradev gave to my questions."

"But the answers could have been given by the king himself! What makes you think that he learnt them from his wife?" asked her father.

The princess smiled and said, "Father, such was the nature of my questions that only a wise woman could have answered them, not a man however wise!"



DOES IT MAKE ALL THAT DIFFERENCE?

Ramu complained to the village chief that he had lost his goat. Next day the goat was found to be in Lagan's possession. Lagan was brought to the court of the village chief.

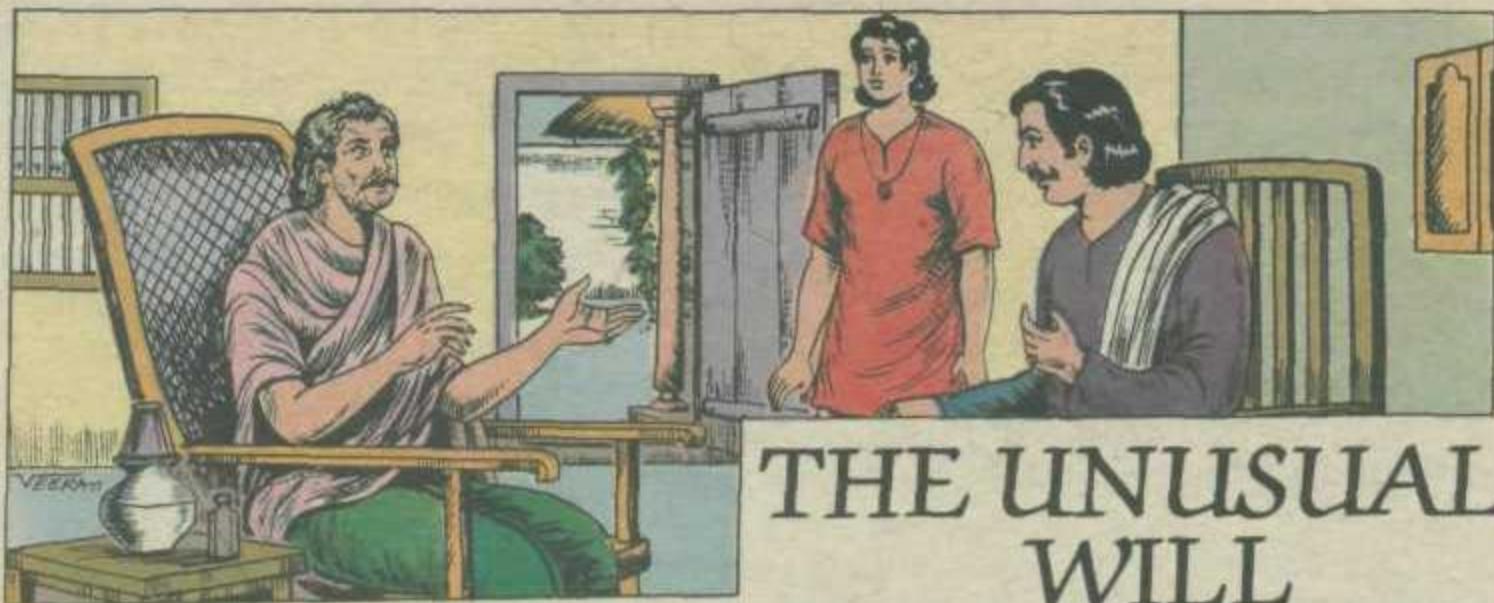
"Why did you steal Ramu's goat?" the chief asked.

"Sir, I found it in the street! Last year I found a coin in the street and you allowed me to keep it," Lagan explained his conduct.

"I allowed you to keep the coin because someone had lost it!" said the chief.

"Sir, I found the coin after someone had lost it. I found the goat before someone had lost it. Does it make all that difference?" demanded Lagan.





THE UNUSUAL WILL

In the village Shivpur lived Shripati Rao. He owned fifty acres of land. That is to say, he was a wealthy man. He worked hard in his fields along with his servants.

His son, Kamal, was a young man who loved merrymaking. He whiled away his time in the company of his friends, hardly ever attending to any work in the fields. Shripati Rao, quite indulgent towards his son, did not mind it very much.

But one day Shripati Rao fell ill. He realised that his end was nearing. He called Kamal to his bedside and said, "My son, whatever money I am leaving behind me will not last long. You must learn to work. That alone would ensure your happiness. Here is my will. I have made such a condition that while you can enjoy all you earn from the lands,

you can never sell them."

Soon thereafter, Shripati Rao breathed his last. Kamal was sad, but soon he began to spend the money left by his father, in feasts and other entertainments.

But as his father had warned him, the money came to an end very soon. "What should I do?" he asked his maternal uncle, Ranjit, who had become his friend, philosopher and guide.

"Farming is something which would not suit your temperament," said Ranjit, thoughtfully.

"That is right. Money is very slow to come from farming. I want money to come fast," said Kamal.

"Start doing business," advised Ranjit.

"Uncle, you know that business needs capital. You also know that my father has made such a condition that I cannot sell



our lands!"

"I know that. But nobody else knows that. The moneylenders would not hesitate to lend money to a person who owns fifty acres of land! Get a loan and invest it in business," said Ranjit.

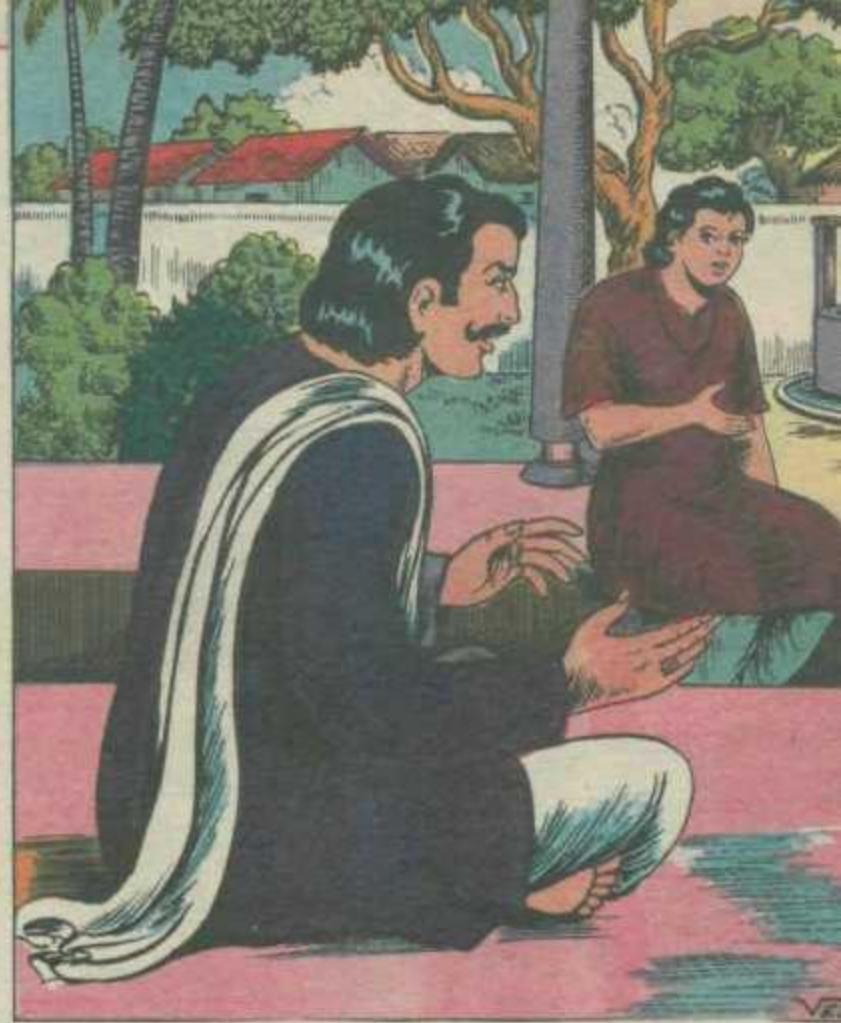
"What if I fail in my business? How to pay back the loan?" asked Kamal.

"Don't pay it. That is all. What can the moneylender do? He cannot hang you!" replied Uncle Ranjit.

Kamal borrowed fifty thousand rupees from the local moneylender. He signed an agreement to the effect that he would pay ten thousand rupees every year, apart from the usual interest. Thus, he would pay back the entire loan in five years.

His business proved a success. He opened a big shop in the village. He bought a large number of items from the town and stored them in his shop. Soon he began collecting several things from his area and supplied them to the merchants in the town.

At the end of the first year he made a profit of twenty thousand rupees. He could have easily paid the moneylender's due, but he thought, "It is true that I made a



profit. But what if I had been a loser? I could not have paid to the moneylender! If so, why should I pay him now?"

His logic was strange, no doubt. But Uncle Ranjit supported his idea. It was because Ranjit exploited him to a certain extent. Kamal spent a lot of money to satisfy Ranjit's cravings for this and that. Ranjit invariably accompanied Kamal on the latter's trips to the town!

Two years passed. The moneylender reminded Kamal about his dues. "Sir, don't you know that the flood has destroyed our crop?" asked Kamal.

"But you borrowed money for



your business, not for your farming!" observed the moneylender..

"I was coming to that. I have also lost much in my business. How can I pay?" said Kamal. "The merchants in the town are all cheats!" he added.

"Kamalji, you are an intelligent young man. You know very well that you have to pay me my dues. It is not my business to tell you how you will do it. But may I suggest something? As I see, you do not care for farming. Much of your lands are lying waste. You have dismissed the servants who were working in your fields. Why don't you sell your lands?" said

the moneylender.

Kamal laughed. " That is the pity, sir, that is the pity. My father's will makes it impossible for me to sell our lands!" he said. He also showed the will to the moneylender.

The moneylender nodded. He understood that Kamal would never pay him in the normal course of things. He reported the matter to the zamindar of the area, Hari Chowdhury.

We are speaking of a time when a zamindar was not only a landlord, but also a judge. Hari Chowdhury, on the receipt of the moneylender's complaint, sent his men to the town. They returned and reported to him that the merchants with whom Kamal traded are known for their honesty. There is no question of any of them cheating Kamal.

Hari Chowdhury then summoned Kamal, Ranjit and the moneylender.

"Kamal, I understand that your business is running at a loss. That is why you cannot pay the moneylender his dues. Well, we have to reconcile ourselves to this hard fact," Chowdhury observed.

"You are right, sir," said

Kamal, quite happy.

"I also understand that your father has made a will according to which you cannot sell away your lands. And we have to reconcile ourselves to this hard fact also," Chowdhury next observed.

" You are right sir," Kamal spoke with great happiness. "Kindly explain this to the moneylender."

Chowdhury smiled and made a gesture asking Kamal to have patience. Then he said, "But there is a solution to the problem. Your father has forbidden you to sell the lands. He has not forbidden you to pawn them out. I direct you to mortgage your lands to the moneylender for a hundred years. Your heirs can redeem them from the moneylender's heirs."

"For a hundred years, sir?" cried out Kamal.

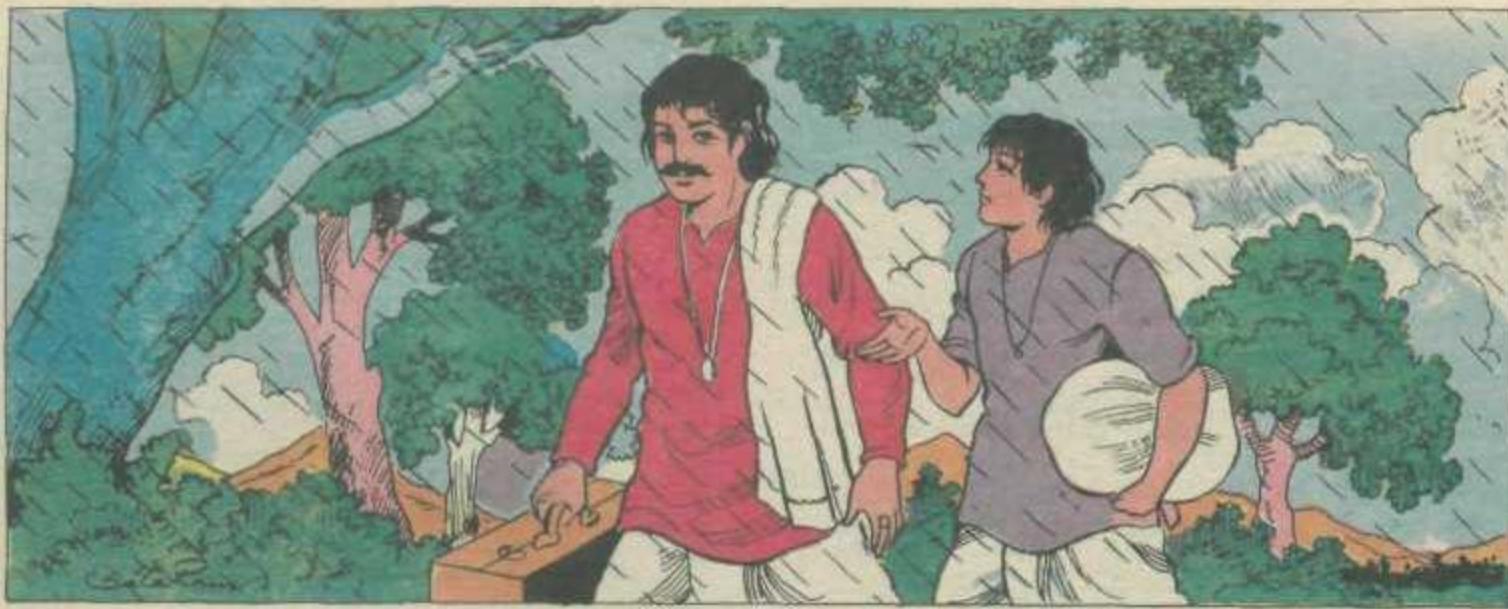
"Yes, for a hundred years. This is because you say that your lands are not yielding good crop. How can the moneylender get back his fifty thousand rupees and the interest on it unless he enjoys a right to them for a hundred years?" asked Chowdhury.

Kamal stood glum and pensive for a while. Then he said, " Sir, I will rather pay his dues in cash, as agreed upon. I apologise for the default. My lands will cost much more than fifty thousand rupees."

"Do so," said Chowdhury. Then, turning to Ranjit, he said, " You are older than Kamal. Are you not ashamed of giving improper advice to him?"

Ranjit and Kamal hung their heads in shame.





BECAUSE OF THE RAINS

A nobleman and his young son were obliged to take a journey to the town. As the two walked, rains came down.

"How callous it is of the gods to send the rains just the day we must travel! They could have waited for tomorrow!" commented the young man with some irritation. But his father said nothing. They walked through the rains. There was no shelter nearby. And it was no use standing under the trees, for they could not protect them from being drenched.

"How cruel these clouds overhead are!" said the young man again. Even then the father said nothing. That irritated the young

man even more. He would have liked his father to say something in support of his sentiments. "What are you thinking of, Father?" the young man asked impatiently after a while.

"Of nothing in particular. But, my son, if we cannot avoid a situation, the wisest thing is to just put up with it in silence. Sometimes what we dislike may prove to be beneficent," said the father.

Added to the cloudy atmosphere, now it was dusk. They were passing through a forest. Beyond it was the river. Once they cross the river, they would be in the town.

But suddenly a bandit sprang



up before them. He wore a short mask to cover the area around his eyes. He looked terrible.

"Stop and hand over your purses and your rings and also gold chains if you have!" he ordered.

The nobleman and his son had all these things on them—purses, rings and gold chains. But, surely, they were unwilling to part with them..

Their hesitation provoked the bandit to bring out his pistol. He pointed it at them and roared, "No time to lose. Give the things while you are alive, or I take them from your dead bodies!"

The young man was thinking of giving a lightning knock to the bandit's hand. But the expe-

rienced bandit understood his mind. He pulled the trigger of his pistol.

Once, twice, thrice! The pistol would not fire. "Oh these rains!" grumbled the bandit. And, of course, the very next moment he found himself lying flat on the ground. The young man was seated on his chest. The father lent a helping hand to bind the bandit. They dragged him to the river-bank. The boatman was too willing to help them carry the fellow to the guard-post on the other side of the river. He was a criminal whom the authorities were trying to capture. The father and the son were rewarded.

"All because of the rains," said the son who had grown wiser.



A BULL IN A CHINA SHOP

What is a China shop? A shop run by a Chinese? What has a bull to do with it? No wonder that the proverb, *A bull in a China shop* should intrigue Jyotiranjan Biswal of Dhenkanal, like so many others.

China here means articles made of porcelain. In the 16th century they used to be imported from China and were called *China*. Subsequently porcelain items were made in the West. Even then they were called *China*.

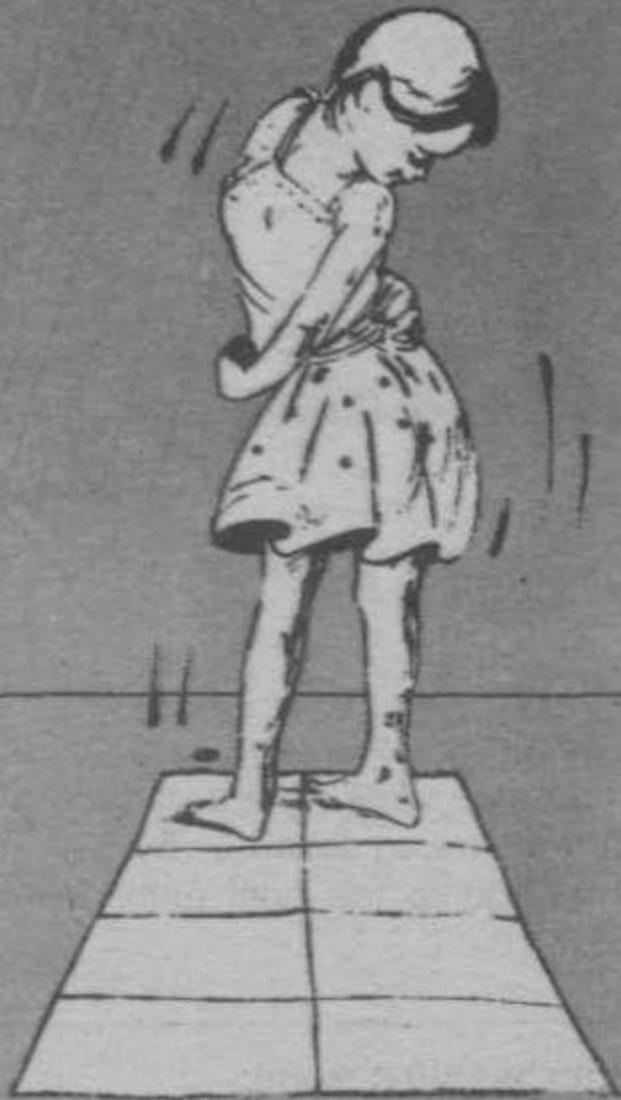
The porcelain items must be handled carefully. Otherwise they would easily break. Now, imagine a furious bull dashing into a shop where the porcelain items are on display. What would happen?

In other words, a bull is least welcome in a China shop. (Probably some day a bull instead of a human customer, had made its way into a China shop and the inevitable had happened!) So, one who does not know how to behave, one who conducts himself in a clumsy, tactless manner or even with violence in a situation that calls for delicacy of gentlemen, is a *bull in a China shop*.

A *bull-headed* person is an impetuous or obstinate fellow. To *bull into* means to dash into a place. To *take the bull by the horns* means to meet a challenge or danger with courage.



Am I Right?



Of course, Dear, You are!

Display your will and work towards it. Believe in your dreams. Make time your teacher and the world your classroom. And get ready to take care of what is yours. The future of India.

Dear Children, Learn while playing. And make a promise that the India of chacha Nehru's dreams will be a reality tomorrow!

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PHOTO CAPTION CONTEST



M. Natarajan



S.B. Takalkar

Can you formulate a caption in a few words, to suit these pictures related to each other? If yes, you may write it on a post card and mail it to Photo Caption Contest, Chandamama, to reach us by 20th of the current month. A reward of Rs. 50/- will go to the best entry which will be published in the issue after the next.

The Prize for November '89 goes to:—

Shaisuvaa,
C/o Sumathi Wet Grinder's
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BANGALORE-560 018.

The Winning Entry:—"See our dance" & "We have no chance"

PICKS FROM THE WISE

Give me the liberty to know, to utter, and to argue freely according to conscience, above all liberties.

—Milton

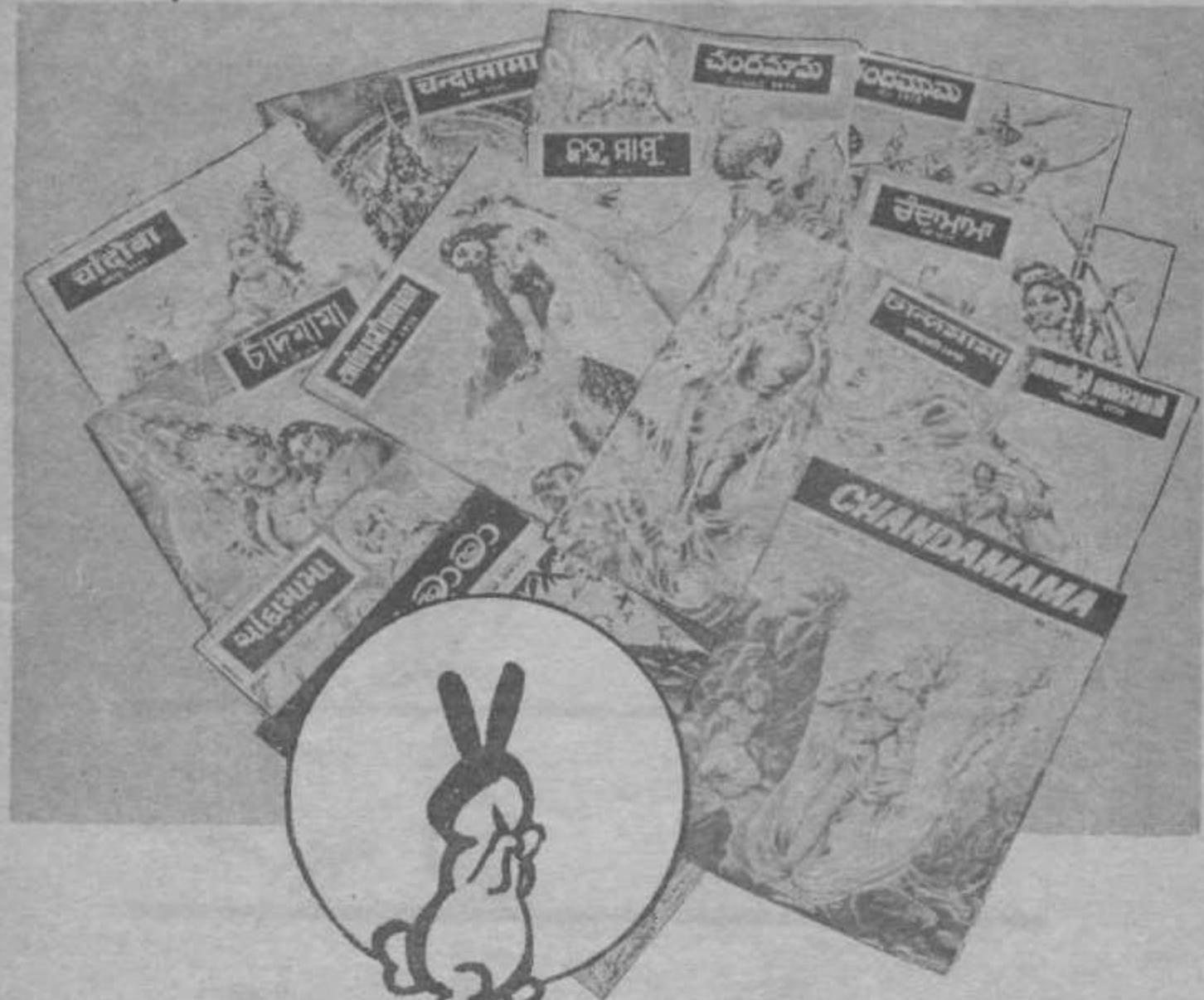
The world is so full of a number of things,
I'm sure we should all be as happy as kings.

—Stevenson

Be wise to-day; 'tis madness to defer.

—Emile Zola





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Parakeet

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Look at my new
mango sweet!

Hey!
Look at my new
mango sweet!

It's got real
mango inside,
birdy!

It's got real
mango inside,
birdy!

Sssssshut up now
and taste my
mango sweet!

Sssssshut up now
and taste my
mango sweet!

'Ya know
what I'm gonna
call it...

Aam-Ras

What did
ya say?

Aaaaam - Rrrras.
But remember ... golden words
are not repeated

Hi - hi - hi!

nutrine
AAM-RAS

A terrific treat
with real mango inside ...
in a pack as colourful as
a parakeet.



Real Mango In Its Very True Colours

